In SEARCH of HISTORY

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PREFACE

It is the task of social sciences to point out political, social and cultural problems and find out their solution. Although natural science and technology are getting more and more importance in developing societies, however, social sciences cannot be ignored and set aside as irrelevant to modern time.

It is wrong approach to draw boundaries between natural and social sciences. On the contrary, both help each other in creating understanding about nature and human society-both integrate philosophically on higher level.

History as one of the important branches of social sciences plays an integral role in creating social and political awareness among people. With the passage of time, it has broadened its scope and now deals nearly every aspect of human life. Therefore, study of history becomes important to understand changing scenario of the world.

These essays which are published in different newspapers make attempt to clarify some historical confusion which is prevailing in our society. I hope it would create some interest in the discipline of history which is deckling in our society.

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WAR AND PEACE IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

Introduction: War and Tradition

In victory and defeat war is a drama which most historians, poets, and writers like to narrate with passion and vigour. It is such a powerful and moving topic that when they describe scenes of battlefields, killing and bloodshed, dialogues between victors and vanquished, they make epics out of such descriptions which sensationalize and thrill the coming generations when they read them. In case of victory or defeat, both sides eulogize their warriors and transform them into heroes, who sacrifice their lives defending honour and dignity of their country. In Greek history the *'Fallen Heroes of Thermopylae'* who fought against the Iranians in defending the pass and were finally killed one by one, are immortalized in the history of Greece. Thucydides devoted his entire historical narrative to the Peloponnesian war fought between Athenians and Spartans. The drama of war becomes more moving and absorbing in the form of poetry as it embodies emotions and sentiments. For example, in the *Mahabharata,* when Arjuna asks Krishna how he could fight against his own kith and kin who were in front of him: "How Krishna, shall I fight Bhimsa and Drona with arrow on the battlefield? They are both objects of reverence, O destroyer of foes. It is better to live on alms in this world without slaying these noble elders, because even after killing them we shall enjoy only blood stained clothes in the form of wealth and sense of enjoyment." Krishna encourages him by arguing that: "The soul is never born nor dies; it exists on coming into being. For

it is unborn, eternal, everlasting and primeval; even though body is slain, the soul is not." It convinced Arjuna and he fought and won the battle that resulted in the creation of the great epic of the *Mahabharta.*

There are thinkers and historians who regard war as an essential force to keep a nation active and alive. Their argument is that war is natural. It is in the psyche of human being and therefore it cannot be avoided. In the words of Heraclitus: "war is the father of all things" Another writer, Lasaulx, believes that war is divine in character and we find its presence in nature. That is why, he believes, the Indians worship Shiva, the god of destruction. He further writes that a warrior is filled with the joy of destruction: "wars clear the air like a thunderstorm, steel the nerves and restore the heroic virtues upon which states were originally founded, in place of indolence, double-dealing and cowardice". According to Burckhardt, a Swiss historian, long duration of peace "leads to enervation; it permits the rise of mass of precarious, fear-ridden, distressful lives that would not have survived without it and that nevertheless claim for "rights"... and degrade the nation. War restores real ability to honor. As for these wretched lives, war may at least reduce them to silence."

When in any society war is respected and regarded as holy and sacred, in such a society warriors and soldiers are honoured and rewarded for their deeds and achievements. Poets compose elegies to pay tributes to their courage and bravery; artists paint them in glowing colours and sculptors carve their statues in order to immortalize their heroic acts. In such an environment those who oppose war are dubbed as cowards and traitors. To die fighting in battlefield becomes an act of honour and pride. Those who flee to save their life are ridiculed and lose their social status.

History is replete with such incidents. In India, the Rajputs have a tradition which is highly praised by historians. In the event of their defeat, the soldiers performed the ritual of *johar* by killing their womenfolk and children and, after donning

saffron dress, they fought till the last warrior. During the siege of Chittor (1567) when Akbar witnessed this, he was very much impressed by the bravery of the Rajputs. When a Rajput Raja, Jaswant Singh fled from a battle against Aurangzeb to Mewar (1658), the queen closed the gates of her fort and did not allow him to enter. There is another example of Abul Fazl, Akbar's closest friend. When he was coming back from the Deccan, he was informed that under the order of Jahangir the Raja of Bundhela was waiting to kill him. He was advised to change the route. He refused because he regarded it as an act of cowardice. He followed the same route, fought against his enemy and died in the battlefield. It is evident that when a society develops such traditions in which warriors and conquerors assume high status, peace-loving people find title space to live a honourable life. Bravery becomes a virtue while peace cowardice and sin. In such a society, scholars and people of knowledge lose all respect and became subservient to warrior classes.

Conquerors are heroes nearly in every society. In the words of a writer, if a person kills a man, he is a murderer, if he kills thousands, he is a conqueror. Based on this criterion, Alexander and Cyrus and other murderers became "the Great". There is another story wherein a pirate told Alexander that they were both bandits; the only difference was of the size of killing and looting. Therefore, a conqueror having more power has capacity to loot and plunder more. According to Burckhardt when conquerors, after devastating cities and massacring people, return to their homeland along with war booty, they are cheered and welcomed by their people and honoured as the chosen people of God.

Machiavelli, the man of the Renaissance, believed that war was essential for rulers. He advised them that they keep their people in war hysteria as it was the only way to divert their attention from their problems and prevent them from joining against them. He argued that a nation always needs an enemy. Its presence keeps people united and loyal to their rulers. What Machiavelli said in the 15th century is true even

today as far as Pakistan is concerned. We are in a war situation after the creation of our country. We are demanded all the time to sacrifice our fundamental rights, our resources, our honour and dignity to defend our country. There is a question: can a poor, sick, and illiterate nation defend its country? Or a time is coming when nothing would be left to defend.

How Wars are justified?

Thucydides, a Greek historian, writing on wars of his time, pointed out that the main motive of war was to loot and plunder and not occupation of other's territory. In the later period, when nations developed agriculture and trade and accumulated wealth and resources, victors not only occupied territories but forcibly acquired wealth of vanquished nation that was called 'war booty'. Greed and thirst of more power led to the foundation of great empires such as the Roman, the Arab, the Carolingian, the Mughuls and the Ottoman. From 15th to 18th centuries, the European countries such as Spain, Portugal, Britain, and France assumed the role of great imperial powers by conquering and occupying Asian, African countries and the newly discovered world.

Whenever wars were fought, imperial powers always found out some moral justification to legitimize them. People were needed for some higher cause to sacrifice their lives, therefore, thinkers and religious scholars did this job by providing moral justification to kill and devastate to fulfil the divine mission. Whereupon, religion became the best tool to mobilize people to wage holy war for it. When a nation got to believe that its religion was true and all other were false, and they were followers of a faith which would prevail all over the world, it motivated them to kill unbelievers in order to accomplish God's mission. In the medieval period, the concept of 'Just War' evolved to justify killing in the name of religion. This is the reason that most of these wars of medieval period were fought in the name of religion though the ulterior motives were economic and political gains. Such as in the wars of Crusades, religion inspired people to fight

but behind the garb were the economic interests of the European merchants and traders who invested huge sums in support of these wars.

However, situation changed in Europe when the institution of nation state emerged and secular ideas and thoughts undermined religious faith. Therefore, instead of religion, nation and nation state acquired top most place in society. Now, wars were waged in the name of nationalism. It was said that 'my country right or wrong was my country'. It meant that moral and ethical values had no place as far as interest of a country was concerned. Social Darwinism was the second inspiring theory that gave a sense of racial superiority to the Europeans over other nations. As a superior and chosen nation it was their natural right to subdue and enslave weaker nations. The arrogance of racial superiority led the British and the French to believe that they were the most civilized and cultured and as such it was their responsibility to civilize others. It was known as the 'white man's burden' or 'mission of civilization' in the imperial jargon.

The concept to civilize the barbarians and backward nations after conquering and enslaving them is very old. For example, Pericles, the Greek ruler, wanted to conquer other nations in the name of civilization. It was his belief that these savage nations could become civilized only after living under the Greek rule. The same argument was given by Abul Fazl, justifying the imperialist policy of the Mughals, that to be ruled by the Mughals meant a blessing to the lesser powers. Some historians, on this basis, give example of the Rajputs, who played a very important role in history by contributing to the extension of the Mughal Empire; otherwise, they might have wasted their energies fighting against each other. Under the Mughals they became Empire builders and acquired a dignified place in history.

To justify devastation of war and killing of people, the Europeans, by adopting racial superiority and notion of civilization, dehumanized the conquered nations. They were

presented as savages, barbarians, and sub-humans. In this case to kill and enslave such people was justified. The superior nations felt no sense of guilt when they massacred the inhabitants of America, Australia, and New Zealand. After occupying their territories, they exploited their natural resources and used them for their own benefit. Hitler, following the same concept and believing in the superiority of the Aryan race, argued that the Slav people were inferior and as they were not capable of using their natural resources, it was the right of the German nation to occupy their land and control their wealth for the advancement of civilization.

The Americans, after donning the mantle of imperialism, and following the concept of "Manifest Destiny" began the policy of occupation and extending their influence beyond their borders. American President, Theodore Roosevelt, once said that he welcomed war because America needed it. When the Americans occupied the Philippines and it was said that what was the use to occupy it as it was far from America, it was argued that the American navy would bring it closer to its border.

The Americans, when engaged in wars, justify their acts of aggression on the medieval as well as on modern concepts of morality. On one hand, they regard their armed conflicts as just was believing that God is on their side. On the other hand, they call their wars a defence of civilization. They believe that the Asian, African and Latin American countries could be civilized only under their control and by following their model. Therefore, American occupation and influence is a blessing for them.

They also repeat the argument that non-European nations are not capable of using their natural resources for the development of humankind, whereupon, it is the right of the Americans as advanced and technological developed country to use these resources. This is why they are trying to control oil from the Arab countries.

The Americans also believe that this century is 'the American

century' and it is their responsibility to maintain sustainable peace in the world. Following the precedent of "Pax Romana" in which the Romans, after crushing all rebellions, established a permanent peace, the Americans assert that by waging relentless wars against all those countries who are possessing weapon of mass destruction, they could establish peace. Pax Americana is the dream of the American ruling class which they determine to achieve.

The Voice for Peace

Throughout the history of humankind, although the time-span of period of war has been relatively short, the havoc and destruction it has wrought on human societies makes it the most devastating phenomenon in history. It is an event that disturbs normal routine of life and suspends all social and cultural activities. The irony is that instead of condemning it, it is generally glorified in history. Pacifists are regarded as cowardly and inactive people while warriors are admired, praised and symbolised determination and courage. Though sentiments are mobilized in favour of war, majority of people have yearned for peace and wish to live a happy, prosperous and strife free life. Therefore, whenever war brought disaster to societies in the past, philosophers, thinkers, and writers powerfully expressed anti-war sentiments. For example, the war between Sparta and Athens produced anti-war sentiments in both societies. The two great dramatists of this period Aristophanes and Euripides revealed and represented anti-war feelings of people in their dramas. Aristophenes in his *Acharnian* has an Athenian farmer who makes private peace and eats imported food while his fellow citizens look on longingly. In his *Lysistrasa* he incites women to withhold their favour until men make peace. Europides in his *Trojan Women* expresses his disgust at the cruelties of war.

However, these voices for peace proved futile and could not prevent war. Moreover, as humankind developed knowledge and experimented in science and technology, more lethal weapons were invented and used for destruction. In Europe and Asia and Africa war became the only solution to solve

political disputes and economic problems. However, as war became more destructive, the longing for peace also became stronger and stronger. Thinkers, philosophers and writers proposed a number of schemes to save the world from war and its atrocities and maintain permanent peace. Immanuel Kant (d.1804) was one of those thinkers who made attempt to outline a scheme to make this world safer. He fully realized that whenever political and economic interests clashed, countries were involved in warfare. He argued that when there was no war between two countries, it was the best time to have diplomatic relations with each other. Diplomacy, in his words, should not be secret but open, so people on both sides know the nature of relationship and share their opinion with ruling classes. He urged that during peace, standing armies should be dismissed because the institution of army needed war for its existence. To have good and friendly relations between two countries, he believed that there should be trade and commerce and cultural links. These activities would bring people closer and promote understanding.

Oswald Spangler (d.1936) in his book *Decline of the West* surveys the history of different civilizations and finds one common feature in every culture and human society: that war has always been a favourite sport of men while women vehemently opposed it, because it took away their offspring and made them sacrifice for the cause of religion or nationalism. Whatever women created after a long struggle was destroyed by war. Therefore, women appeared in history being anti-war and against militarism.

First World War brought such a disaster that when it was over, people were shocked when it was known that 9 million died on both sides. It was the war in which new weapons such as tanks, shells and machineguns were used. Thousands of soldiers experienced life trenches during the war. That is why there was a strong reaction against war that was expressed in fiction, short stories, plays, poetry and memoirs. Henri Babusse, the author of *Le feu* describes life in trenches:

"What a life. Mud, earth, rain. We are saturated, dyed, kneaded. One finds dirt everywhere, in pockets, in handkerchiefs, in clothes, in food." His call to French soldiers was to reject both 'Deutschland ueber alles' and 'France before all'. He says: "Love France as you love your mother... but don't place her before justice and morality."

Karl Kraus in his novel *The last days of mankind* depicts the condition of soldiers who were sent to front for fighting: "I saw you on the day when you marched out. The rain and mud of this fatherland and its infamous music were the farewell, as they herded you into the cattle cart! I see your pale face in the orgy of filth and lies in this frightful farewell at freight station from which the human material is dispatched."

There was a time when people remained unaware of the real cause of war. Now with the spread of political consciousness and publication of vast literature against war, more people are aware of the real reason behind it. The best example is the two Gulf wars. Although the USA and the U.K claimed that their purpose was to liberate Iraqi people from the tyranny of Saddam Hussain. It is clear to everybody that the real purpose is to control oil wells of the Middle East.

Any hope of preventing war depends on the attitude of the people. If they react against war and strongly demonstrate their sentiments, governments have to cease hostilities and find peaceful solutions. If man wants to live a normal life and enjoy the fruits of his labour, he has to choose peace. As Russell writes: "How to live in freedom and joy. At peace with himself and therefore with all mankind. This will happen if man will choose joy rather than sorrow. If not, eternal death will bury man in deserved oblivion."

The Peace Movements

As voices for peace were generally low and could not be heard everywhere, peace activists decided to launch well organised movements against war to mobilize people in favour of peace. There were two approaches to these

movements: one attempt was made to convince people to abandon arms; in the second approach it was argued that the main causes of war should be analysed and removed, and a way out should be sought in which conflicts and disputes should be resolved by diplomatic means. It was also decided that movements should be well organized to create awareness against the horrors of war. Napoleanic wars in Europe and American war with Cuba, Puerto Rico, and the Philippines urged political activists as well as intellectuals to launch movements for peace and raise their voice against war. It resulted in the emergence of New York Peace Society in 1815, British Peace Society in 1816, and American Peace Society in 1828. From 1848 to 1851 these organizations held peace conferences regularly and discussed how world peace could be established. Their proposals were that for maintaining peace negotiation and mutual talks were essential elements. Those nations who had conflicts with each other, they should resolve their problems with the help of diplomacy rather to go to war for solution. Importantly, armament race was the cause for tension, therefore, production of armament should be curtailed and finally, attempts should be made to eliminate them.

The peace movements were further spread to other countries and in 1867 a League of Peace was founded in France. In 1891, Germany and Austria organized groups for peace. Bertha von Sttutner published her book *Die Waffen Nieder* (Lay down your Arms) in 1889 that soon became the Bible for peace lovers. In 1905 National Council for Peace was formed which represented various groups. This clearly indicates how people were concerned about peace.

In the United States in 1866 Universal Peace Union was followed by World Peace Foundation, Church Peace Union and in 1899 Anti-Imperialist League. Mark Twain was its active member and extensively propagated against war in his writings. In one of his essays, he wrote that war divided a nation into two groups: patriots and traitors. In another article he asserted that nations should decide their problems

and disputes by themselves without any external interference. He openly declared that he was anti-imperialist and opposed any invasion and occupation of other country.

The peace movements opposed the theory that man was inherently prone to jealousy, hatred and terrorism and argued that man always wanted to live in peace and harmony. Therefore, to prevent conflicts, the best method was to promote sentiments of love and brotherhood. Man was exhausted as a result of centuries long wars and wanted to maintain a sustainable peace in the world to enjoy worldly pleasure. To them, education was the best medium to promote these ideas. They also believed that awareness should be created among people that wars were fought for political and economic interest of ruling classes and not for their welfare. So, they should not be trapped by the slogans of nationalism, patriotism, and racism.

In the 19th century, Europe, as a result of colonization and exploitation of colonial resources, was advancing rapidly and it was generally believed that their progress would remain un-hindered. Interestingly, in the peace movements, the question of colonial wars was not raised; neither occupation of colonies was condemned. These peace movements concentrated on Europe and America and wanted to prevent and if possible to eliminate all conflicts peacefully. However, in spite of their efforts and the emergence of democratic institutions, they failed to stop the First World War which broke out in 1914. The outcome of the war was horrendous and shattered the dream of progress and the conception of utopia. Immediately after the war, the League of Nations was founded to resolve all disputes among nations with diplomacy. In 1930s, peace conferences were held in the Hague and Geneva. Einstein, the scientist, also attended one of such conferences and was shocked to observe that the delegates of different countries were discussing as to what weapons should be used and what not. They were in favour of war and only wanted that it should be fought on some principles. Disgusted by their discussion, Einstein called a

separate press conference and said that there was no such thing as humanized war. War was always inhuman, and, therefore, should be abolished altogether.

However, the peace movements could not prevent the Second World War that was more catastrophic than the first because atom bombs were dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki which destroyed the cities and its population. The Americans prohibited the Japanese not to disclose the horror of dropping of bombs.

The peace movements, after the war, were subdued and could not raise their voice loudly. Only during Algerian war of independence, the French public demonstrated against their government and forced to recognize Algerian independence. The movement again emerged forcefully against Vietnam War. During the first and the second Gulf wars, there were demonstrations, especially in the recent war, huge demonstration exposed the ulterior motives of the USA and Britain and pressurized their government not to invade Iraq. In democratic societies, there is space for people to demonstrate and express their views, but it is argued that decisions are made in parliaments and not in the streets. In spite of people's opposition, Iraq was invaded and occupied which raises the question that: can people's voice be heard only at the time of election and be ignored in deciding such serious issues as war and occupation. It is depressing that protest and voices of the people are drowned in the noises of tanks, bombardments, and machineguns. Wareen E. Keuhl, writing on 'International Peace' observes that: "Man, therefore, stands at the same threshold he approached centuries ago, despite improved means of communication, and ominous threat to his survival, an increased awareness of his danger and the experiences and machinery of his past to aid him, peace still remains a dream. The idea of peace, however, has survived innumerable wars and still motivates men to hope and work for the millennium."

CULTURAL INTERVENTION AND SOCIAL CHANGE

Studying social change, generally historians either minimize or ignore the impact of culture and give more emphasis to political events and economic development. This approach, subsequently, reduces the dynamics of society and one fails to comprehend complexities of the process of social change. Looking in depth, we find that the system of social action has three dimensions: social system, the cultural system and the personality system. Out of these three, culture plays very significant role in shaping, formulating and changing values and traditions of a society.

When we talk about culture, it includes literature, paintings, music, dance, sculpture, folklores, festivals, and celebrations. It creates such traditions, institutions, values, norms and customs, which become marks of identification and characteristic of a society and its members. As culture is created, developed and used according to the needs of a community, it, on one hand, makes attempts to sustain, conserve, and preserve the old traditions and values in the interest of privileged groups who derive their power and influence from them. On the other hand, it challenges out-dated customs and traditions and introduces new social values to adjust according to the requirements and change of time. Therefore, society remains in conflict between forces of continuity and change. History progresses because of this conflict. It gives society a new life, a new energy, and a new vitality to resist and to change. If there is an end to conflict, it means stagnation, deterioration and decline.

According to anthropologists and sociologists, there are four categories of culture: elitist which claims to have superior values and, therefore, affordable only to few privileged and rich classes; the holistic which covers whole way of life; the hegemonic which is imposed by the ruling classes on majority; and pluralistic which integrates different sections of society into one unit. In another categorization, the Chinese divide it as mental and manual, town and countryside, and industrial and agrarian. In another broad definition there are two cultures: high and popular. High culture represents the ruling classes while popular of the masses. However, Edward Tyler comprehensively defines it as: "Culture is everything which is socially learned and shared by members of a society."

Shared culture is used in case of political crisis when a nation as a whole face danger either of internal disintegration or foreign invasion or domination. In this case ruling classes, who exclude masses from their high cultural domain, include them in a nationalist culture and inspire them to take side of the establishment in the name of nationalism and patriotism. This phenomenon we have seen during the colonization period when struggle for independence was launched by the elite classes. During the process historical past was resurrected and a shared culture was constituted to mobilize masses to take part in the struggle against colonialism. The ruling classes also talk about shared culture when they face either political crises or economic downfall. At this stage all sections of society are appealed to protect the cultural values in the large interest of the nation. Shared culture gives a sense of common identity and helps to strengthen social movements, which are initiated to change the structure of a society. Democratic and secular societies with egalitarian values bring radical social changes in which various groups and institutions help each other and contribute to a change that covers the interest of all.

Culture plays also an important role in the life of minorities who are generally discriminated in such societies where there

is no political and religious freedom. Under these circumstances, their cultural values and symbols help them to retain their identity.

In this paper an attempts is made to focus the role of culture in changing the patterns of Western society and that how different political-cultural movements tried to bring social changes and political consciousness in the subcontinent.

The Renaissance Culture

Medieval Europe culturally was completely under the grip of religion. The music, paintings, sculpture, architecture, festivals, rituals, and processions were all coloured heavily with religion. It is said that from cradle to grave religion controlled life and death of an individual. However, social and economic forces slowly changed the pattern of life. The geographical discoveries, encounter with people of other religions and cultures, and the expansion of trade and commercial activities brought a new approach which changed the outlook about worldly life. Efforts were made to interplay of earthly interest. Laws and social and political institutions were reconstituted to accommodate according to the variety of human conditions. In the 14th century, following this approach, Renaissance challenged the religious hold and brought cultural changes first in Italy and then in the rest of Europe. As a result of it, new learning and literature, the new paintings and architecture and new moral values emerged to fulfil the needs of society. George Voigt in his book *Revival of Classical Antiquities* (1859) writes that: "At this moment there developed in Italy the seed of a new civilization, which was to bear its fruits first in the literature and artistic field and later to gather under the standard of literature and scholarship not merely in Italy but the whole civilized world."

To encounter divine authority and religious hold, the significant contribution of the Renaissance culture was the adoption of 'huminitas'. It was the movement of a new evolution of man, of his place in universe, and in history. The

concept of humanism promoted the idea that humans were responsible for their own destiny. It was argued that they could change the world without divine intervention. According to N.F.Cantor, humanism "emphasized the primacy of human values and individual creativity over feudal and ecclesiastical traditions and institutions... Humanism advocated an educational system in which classical studies were the curriculum for moral as well as intellectual training". As traders and merchants were exploring the world and adventurers voyaging around the globe, it was needed to get rid of spiritual, superstitious, social and political clutches of the medieval age. Only liberated people could construct the world. The discovery of man brought tremendous changes in the sphere of culture; humans became topic and theme of paintings, sculpture, literature, music, and dancing. Human body was glorified and adored by artists and sculptors. Art and literature once freed from religious taboos and censorship flourished and emerged as powerful tools to create social and political consciousness in the society.

The concept of humanism greatly influenced education which subsequently led to change in the manners and behaviour of the people. "The curriculum and pedagogy that the renaissance humanist" writes Cantor, "had established all over Western Europe by 1500 was the foundation of the French lycee, the German gymnasium and English public (non-clerical) school of modern times. In these schools was crystallized the cultural heritage of the classical and medieval world that achieved a universal discourse, a common language (usually Latin and French), and a standardized symbolic culture."

Another contribution of the Renaissance culture was in the realm of social behaviour, manners and attitudes. The whole process is exhaustively discusses by Norbert Elias in his book *The Civilizing Process* (1978). The medieval man was not aware of hygiene and cleanliness that was indicated in his wearing of dress, eating habits, and conversing with each other. To

change the behaviour and manners, a number of books were written during the Renaissance period." Noble, courteous behaviour is constantly contrasted to 'coarse manners'," writes Norbert Elias on the contents of these books.

For example, one book pointed out the manners of eating:

> "Some people bite a slice and then dunk it in the dish in a coarse way; refined people reject such bad manners."
> "A number of people gnaw a bone and then put it back in the dish; this is a serious offence."
> "Do not scrape your throat with your bare hand while eating; but if you have to, do it politely with your coat."
> "It is not decent to poke your fingers into your ears or eyes, as some people do, or to pick your nose while eating. These three habits are bad."
> "I hear that some eat unwashed; (if it is true, it is a bad sign). May their fingers be palsied."

There is a book written by the Italian writer known as Castiglione with the title of *Book of the Courtier*. He tells us the characteristics of a noble and civilized man. According to him, a gentleman should be physically attractive and accomplished in all things. He should be a man of art and letters and refrain from boasting and bragging. Moreover, he must be careful in his speech and conduct.

The culture of the Renaissance first changed the elite classes and then influenced the other sections of society to follow this model. It liberated Europe from religious extremism and inaugurated an era of liberalism and enlightenment.

The Reformation that followed the Renaissance ended the hegemony of church and promoted the notion of nation state and national culture. Adoption of national language unleashed the creativity of European nations to enrich their culture and identify them with it.

The French Revolution and its Culture

French Revolution of 1789, as a result of political change, created a new culture that slowly transformed the European

society from old regime of despotism to democracy. The slogan of the Revolution was liberty, equality, and fraternity that ended the hegemony of aristocracy and its culture. The social hierarchy came to an end. New ones replaced the old traditions and institutions. The impact of Revolution was felt in every sphere of life. All privileged symbols of monarchy and nobility were discredited. People started to address each other as 'citizen' by abandoning all titles such as 'His Highness' or 'His Exalted'. Separation of the church from the state laid down the foundation of secularism which subsequently led to religious toleration, A strong sense of nationalism was created when France was attacked by the rival European power and a people's army was recruited to defend the country. Another significant aspect of the new revolutionary culture was the involvement of women in the social, political and cultural activities. There was an active participation of women. In the word of Mria Mies: "They hoped to make their own revolution within the Great Revolution by joining in the struggle on the streets of Paris, as well as in the many discussion groups and republican clubs that had sprung up all over the country. Large masses of women from the impoverished sections of Paris participated actively in the battle against feudalism." The culture that was produced by the revolution spread to the whole of Europe and changed its political and social structures.

The Industrial Culture

The term of the Industrial Revolution was first used by A. Toyanbee and located it in the middle of the 18th century. It first occurred in England and then slowly spread to the other European countries. Unlike the French Revolution it transformed the European society slowly and gradually. It encountered the feudal culture and agrarian society and introduced its own values and traditions that reshaped the structure of society. Agrarian culture that was dominated by festivals, celebrations and processions were discontinued in the cities. Workers who came from villages were soon cut off from their roots from their traditional life and became

unknown in the city life. The working conditions in the early stage were so strenuous that they did not find leisure time to involve in such cultural activities. Factory owners and the state authorities also discouraged them to assemble and participate in any celebration because it was regarded as a threat to law and order.

In the early phase of the Industrial Revolution the life of the workers was miserable. They lived in slums where there was no sewerage system or availability of clean drinking water and no medical facility in case of sickness. There was no security of job and no pension in the old age. However, slowly realization came that educated, healthy, and skilled workers were more productive than an uneducated and unskilled labourer. This led to setting up schools, hospitals, and training centres to ensure utilization of human energy for more production.

The artists and writers reacted against the gloomy atmosphere and as Peter N. Sterner observes: "Culture changed as well. Many artists and writers turned against the ugliness of the industrial setting. Romantic painters early in the nineteenth century concentrated on idyllic scenes of nature in part to contrast with the blight of factory cities. A bit later, many artists professed withdrawal from their larger society, urging that art for art's sake; this was a radical alternative to industrial materialism. On a more popular level, the Industrial Revolution stimulated interest in secular rather than religious sculpture."

The Industrial Revolution radicalized the communication system by building roads, lying railway tracks and using canals for transportation by steamers. The size of towns expanded and new labour force that migrated from the villages became a part of city life. Factory system introduced a new culture in which all workers worked together under one roof that subsequently created in them a sense of solidarity. However, factory system demanded punctuality of time and discipline. While working, they were watched by foremen and supervisors. "New pace and discipline", writes

Sterns, "a life time of supervision by a separate management group, and a limited sense of achievement, there were the hallmarks of factory work experience..."

The industrial revolution changed the family structure of the middle class. As male became the lone breadwinner and supporter of a family, power and privileges of masculinity emerged with full force. The status of women lowered down to manage family affairs and looked after children. Girls were required to get basic education and training in music and dancing to get appropriate husband. The daily routine was that the day was spent in work and the evening time was spared in hearing some books that were read loudly. The girls played the piano to show their expertise in music and to entertain the family. Middle class, to distinguish it from the working class, adopted a life style that identified it to the lower classes. Wallpapers decorated houses; stylish furniture and carpets were used to display their taste and wealth. In case of the working class, though women and children worked to meet the growing expenses but the status of man, as a patriarch was recognized superior. Working class women suffered greatly as they had to work part time and took care of domestic duties and fulfil household requirements with tight budget.

The industrial culture divided society not on the basis of class but also on the basis of professionalism. Of course, there were rich and poor classes creating a contrast of opulence and impoverishment. Then there were skilled and unskilled workers whose social status differed greatly. The growth and expansion of industry created new professional classes of engineers, accountants, managers, and technicians. They were very much conscious of their professions and had a pride of their performance. The life style of society further changed as a result of mass productions when markets were flooded with commodities. Shops displayed their goods with style to attract customers. Sales girls are employed to deal with the buyers. It changed the whole culture of selling and buying.

Competition was the code word of success in the industrial

cultural environment. There were the stories of rag to rich success. It was said that if poverty existed it was the result of poor work habits than a system.

It is argued that the industrial culture on one hand liberated workers from the clutches of feudalism, but on the other hand it chained them with exploitative system of capitalism. However, with the growth of industrialization, social, political and economic structures were changed. Democratic values became strong, secularization of mind took place, and individualism was recognized as an important ideology of a society. It led to freedom of speech, expression, worship, and surety of basic human rights. The industrial society became so elastic that it became easy for it to absorb different cultural values. The theory of *melting pot* and *bowl of salad* both suited to it. An industrial cultural society was ready to absorb any new element in a melting pot. It was also ready to keep the separate identity of each group with tolerance like a bowl of salad.

Indian Subcontinent and the Bhakti Movement

For a long time it was argued by some historians that the Indian society that was multi-religious, multi-cultured and caste–ridden, was stagnant and there was no mobility or the process of change in its structure. The modern Indian historians, however, challenge this interpretation with strong evidence that the social and cultural changes had been taking place throughout history. One of its examples is the Bhakti Movement.

In the 13th and 14th centuries India went through social, cultural, religious, and political changes. The Turkish rule ended the small states and laid down foundation of a kingdom that politically united North India under a Sultan. Ulama, who came from different parts of the Muslim world, tried to create religious differences between Muslims and Kafirs and pressurized the rulers to implement the *Shariat*. Sufis and different orders (*Silsila*) challenged the religious orthodoxy and preached religious tolerance. With the

establishment of the Turkish rule, the Brahmans lost the patron rulers and retired to the background. When Persian became court language, it reduced the status of Sanskrit and with it the status of the Brahman priest further lowered down.

Moreover, the Indian society greatly changed as a result of technology that was introduced by the Turks. These new technological inventions improved agricultural products and promoted new crafts that subsequently raised the social status of artisans' classes. The mobility of lower castes to higher social ladder was not liked by the upper castes. That is why the historian of the Saltanate period, Ziauddin Barani had great contempt for them and advised the rulers not to appoint them on higher posts.

Bhakti Movement of 13th and 14th centuries was the product of this milieu. Was it a voice of the voiceless people and lower castes that challenged all those customs and practices that were prejudiced to them or it had some other motives? Historians interpreted it differently. To some it was a movement to check conversion to Islam and reform the Hindu society from the below that it could face the challenges of a new religion. On the other hand, it is said that it was an attempt to bring the Muslims to the fold of Hindusim. K.N.Panikar, a famous historian, looks at the movement as balm on the wounds which occurred as a result of the Muslim conquests on the body of India. The Russian historians interpret it as revolt of people against feudalism. To some, however, it was a movement to bring Hindus and Muslim together abandoning all those beliefs and rituals that created a gulf between them.

The main characteristics of the Bhakti Movement are: first, all its exponents belonged to the lower castes and were proud of it. It shows that there was mobility in the society and rigidity of caste system was crumbling. Secondly, they challenged religious orthodoxy, formalism, religious rituals, and authority of Mullas and Pandits. Their emphasis was direct relation with God without any mediation. Direct access to

God required no religious affiliation. Love of God eliminates all prejudices and differences and brings people together irrespective of their caste, creed, and class. Thirdly, the leaders of the movement adopted different genre of poetry to mobilize people. It was most effective and appealing methods in a society that was illiterate. They roamed from village to village and recited poems that preach devotion and love to God. Fourthly, they concentrated their efforts to the rural areas. Cities to them were den of corruption and greed. Therefore, they addressed the common people and created in them spirit of endurance to face miseries and retain hope for salvation.

Bhakti Movement was divided into two schools of thought: Saguna and Nirguna. Saguna believed that divine power should be worshipped in some form. Therefore, idol worship was adopted by its followers that led them to places of worship (temples) and recitation of divine books. Their main exponents were Sur Das, Tulsi Das, Mira Bai, Chaitinya, and Vidhiyapi. In the end it was absorbed by the mainstream Hindu religion. Nirguna, on the other hand, did not believe in the worship of God in any form, or to go to the places of worship, or observe religious rituals. According to their teaching, God is in every person and, therefore, there was no need of any temple or mosque. As artisans, workers, and small traders were its followers, they ridiculed bookish knowledge. Kabir, Rai Das, Akhu Bhagat, Charan Das, and Dadu Diyal were its leaders.

By challenging religious orthodoxy and hypocrisy of priests, Hindus and Muslims alike, the movement created tolerance in the Indian society and maintained harmony of contradictions of different religions. Though it rejected the religious authority but emphasized for its disciples to follow the Guru. However, the criticism is that it concentrated on the salvation of individual but no attempt was made to change the society as a whole. Moreover, there was heavy reliance on God for salvation and belief that exploiters and oppressors would be punished by Him.

However, in Maharashtra, Bhakti Moment that was popularized by Ram Das, created 'Maharashra Dharam' and supported Shivaji in his attempt to struggle against the Mughals and found his own Empire. In the Punjab, Guru Nanak followed the Nirguna school of Bhakti Movement but gradually his successors abandoned it and militarized the Sikh community against the Mughals.

Though Bhakti Movement has become a part of history, still resonance of its songs thrill people and take them away from bitterness and violence that they face in their daily lives to peace and harmony.

Among the Bhagats of the movements, the most prominent and popular was Kabir who challenged religious orthodoxy, caste system, written knowledge, and preached for equality and tolerance. He had contempt for yogis, sadhus and moulvis who became but for his sarcasm. His message is:

> The jogi cries: Gorakh, Gorakh!
> The Hindu invokes the name of Ram,
> The Mussalman cries: Khuda is one!
> But lord of Kabir pervades all.

Kabir's view is that man can purify himself by rejecting all religions as they create hatred and prejudice:

The Brahman is the Guru of the world, but he is not the devotees, Guru:

> He got entangled in his four Vedas
> And there he died.
> If the Shaykh be devoid of patience,
> Of what use is that Kaaba pilgrimage?
> How can he whose soul is not firm
> Can hope to reach God.

Kabir expresses the sentiments of simple folks who were oppressed not only politically but also religiously by rulers and priests. His scathing attack exposed them to the people of their real nature. His verses reduce them as clowns and buffoons.

> O Miyan your order is not just: We are poor servants of God- and you just seek glory!

> Allah is the Master of Religion; He did not order to oppress the poor:
> Your *Murshid* and your *Pir* tell me, where did they come from?
> You observe the *Ramzan* and you keep spelling prayers-
> But the Kalima won't earn you your heaven: He, who knows Him through the Experience,
> His soul possesses seventy Kaabas.

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The cultural traditions of the Bhakti Movement continued and reached to maturity during the reign of Akbar who propounded his concept of *sulh-i-kul* or peace with all. A composite culture developed in the elite class where social and cultural ties were more stronger than religion. City life was also changed. The Mughal cities expanded in size and became centers of trade and commerce. Artisan, artists, poets and men of letters found rich patron there to promote their work. All these groups were tied culturally with each other and tolerated their different religious way of life. Vidyapati, a poet, commenting on the city life of Jaunpur said: "Here Muslims say *bismillah* and slaughter cattle; there Hindus offer sacrifices to God; here they kneel in *namaz,* there they offer *puja;* here live Oijahs, there live Khawajas."

The Dalit Movement

The echoes of the Bhakti Movement are heard in the modern period when the untouchables launched their movement that they called 'Dalit', meaning oppressed, exploited or

downtrodden. The political movement of the untouchable known as the 'Dalit Panther' defines it as:

> "*Who is dalit?* Members of the scheduled castes and tribes, neo-Buddhists, the working people, the landless and poor peasants, women and those who are being exploited economically, politically and in the name of religion."

In another definition, Gangadhar Pantawane, an editor of magazine explains that:

> "To me, Dalit is not a caste. He is a man exploited by social and economic traditions of this country. He does not believe in God, Rebirth, Soul, Holy books teaching separatism, Fate and Heaven because they made him a slave. He does not believe in humanism. Dalit is a symbol of change and revolution."

The Dalits belonging to the lower castes suffered humiliation, insult, and indignity for centuries. They were not allowed to get any education and kept backward economically by social traditions. During the colonial period, some of them got chance to get education and raise their status economically, but not socially. After the independence, a small section from the dalit emerged equipped with education and formed a class that was conscious of their exploitation. These people in the 1960s and 1970s created a 'dalit culture' that brought a new consciousness among the downtrodden people. Mostly, the feelings were expressed in poetry, short stories, and plays. A powerful literary movement represented deep-rooted anger against all those traditions, values, and customs that they regarded as their enemies. A Dalit poet V.I. Kalekar passionately rejected the Hindu culture that kept his people enslaved:

> No! No! No!
> A triple rejection
> To your economic, social, political, mental, religious, moral and cultural pollution.
> You ever-living, ever-luminous suns!
> Your very touch brings a contagious disease.
> But I am a new sun

Independent, self-luminating
Possessed of a new spirit
I reject your culture.
I reject your Parmeshwar-centered tradition.
I reject your religion-based literature.
I have taken into account the unceasing battles.
I may bend but I won't break.

In this new culture which is formulated on the basis of literature. There is cultural clash. The Dalit by negating and eliminating the Hindu culture, laid down the foundations of a counter culture that could liberate them from centuries old inhuman and cruel traditions.

Arjun Dangle, in one of his poems titles as 'Revolution' expressed the whole history of the untouchables:

We used to be their friends
When, clay pots hung our necks,
Brooms tied to our rumps,
We made our rounds through the Upper Lane
Calling out *johar Mayabap.*
We fought with crows,
Never even given them the snot from our noses
As we dragged out the Upper Lane's cattle,
Skinned it neatly
And shared the meat among ourselves.
They used to love us then.
We warred with jackals-dogs-vultures-kites
Because we ate their share.
Today we see a root-to-top change.
Crows-jackals-dogs-vultures-kites
Are our close friends.
The Upper Lane doors are closed to us.
Shout victory to the revolution
Show victory
Burn, burn those who strike a blow at tradition.

One of the important aspects of the new Dalit culture is that Dalit women are also raising their voice against their victimization. Dalit women are being dishonoured and molested because of their caste. Mrs. Bansode, a Dalit poetess expressing her ordeal writes:

This complaint of mine
Is against the orthodox culture
Which has imprisoned us in a sealed room,
Which has given us charity of life completely boycotted.
Where the wind treats us as strangers,
Where monsoons give us only famines
Where the water plays with us
The most inhuman game of mirage.
We are rejecting this
Unclean and poisonous life.
And to escape from these cruel curses
Will you give me
A bright and auspicious moon?
My countrymen, to your court
I have brought a complaint.
Will you give me justice?

Dalit playwrights also played an important role in spreading the counter culture that challenged the establishment and the Hindu culture. In the words of B.R.Joshi: "Through the medium of theatre and street plays these writers are depicting effectively the inner and external conflicts in Dalit life and Dalit society."

It appears that to get a dignified place in the society, the Dalits are fighting a cultural battle by eliminating the higher Hindu culture to get recognition of their popular culture. The present Indian political scene is the best example to show how the upper castes are struggling hard to maintain their hegemony by holding political power and following the ideology of 'Hindutva'. However, the democratic process provides some space to the Dalits to raise their voice and get their basic rights. The Dalit struggle is going on. It is a long way to go and achieve the ends.

Counter Culture

Bhakti and Dalit movements, though they occurred in different time and space, both indicate the power and vitality of the counter culture that challenged the hegemonic culture and its traditions. There are interesting methodologies that

were developed by the common people in popular culture to expose brutality, exploitation and injustices of the ruling classes. For example, one of the popular forms was the story telling in the community gatherings. The main heroes of these stories were not kings or generals or high office holders but those who opposed the establishment and rebelled against their rule. There were heroes of common people who fought against oppressors on behalf of the people to get justice. There were comedians, jokers, and swindlers who amused people by their tricks and provided temporary relief from hardships of life. Dacoits and bandits who defied the power of government instantly transformed as heroes. They became the symbols of people's power and their ambitions. Their encounters with political authority were not only narrated in stories but songs were also composed and sung far and wide with zeal and fervour. In North India Sultana Dako became such an icon for common people. In the Punjab Nizam Lohar is still celebrated in folk literature as a hero. In Sindh, when Pro Chandio, a dacoit, was killed, people attended his funeral in great number and paid him tribute because he defied the strong centre and state institutions that were regarded as oppressive by the people of Sindh. We can find same examples in nearly every area and region of the Indian subcontinent.

In another example, people reduced the ruling classes to shame by creating a culture of gossips against them - a very powerful medium that was used in the past and is also affectively used today. The image of rulers, generals, and office holders, which was propagated by the official media as pious, generous, and virtuous, was over-turned in public gossips. They were transformed as tyrant, lecherous, immoral, and wicket. The Italian traveler Mannuci, who visited India during Shahjahan's period, collected such gossips in his book *Storia do Mogor*. He writes the gossips of bazar people in which Shahjahan appears as womanizer and immoral person. The royal *harem* is a den of corruption. This people's perception of the royalty brought it down to the lowest level of morality. The gossips turned the image of royalty upside down.

break-up of the country.

Since the subject was introduced by People's Party of Pakistan, it was vehemently opposed by the religious parties in the Parliament. They presumed that the PPP government might use the initiative to propagate socialism or secularism by teaching Pakistan studies. However, when Ziaul Haq came to power in 1977 after overthrowing Z.A.Bhutto's government, he made its study mandatory in 1981 in all educational institutions including professional colleges. It eventually became compulsory also for O- and A- level students at the request of the Pakistan government. This provided an opportunity for publishers to print a whole lot of new textbooks. Most of the authors were not historians but teachers or writers not historians but teachers or writers of cheap textbooks. They obediently followed the government's instructions in writing in English as well as in Urdu.

Before we proceed further, it would be good to first understand the definition and implication of an ideology. S.A.Alatas in his book, *The Myth of the Lazy Native*, defines ideology based on Karl Manheim's thoughts as: "(a) it seeks to justify a particular political, social, and economic order; (b) in this attempt, it distorts that part of the social reality and contradicts its main presuppositions; (c) it exists primarily in a form of manifest thought content which is different from its latent content; (d) it is authoritative in nature; (e) it expresses the interest of a distinctive group; (f) when it is dominant it creates a false consciousness among the group it represents as well as the group it dominates; (g) it can draw its ideas from any source, science, religion, culture, economics, history, etc."

Following the creation of Pakistan, the term 'Islamic ideology' was used to define the country as an Ideological state. Gul Shahzad Sarwar in Pakistan Studies, explains the term: "Islamic ideology constitutes, no doubt, a basis common to all manifestations of Pakistani society. The ideology is promoting a sense of self-identity. The ideology looks at man as forming a unity whose spiritual needs cannot be divorced from his material needs." This ideology was used to mobilize

religious nationalism as a binding force of the five provinces of Pakistan and to discourage and condemn the provincial nationalism as being anti-Pakistan.

However, religious nationalism was first challenged by the small provinces in 1955-56 when One Unit was implemented. It was finally shattered when East Pakistan began to agitate for independence. To counter this, in 1969-1970, General Sher Ali, a minister in the cabinet of Yehya Khan, popularized the term 'Pakistan Ideology'. It was an important shift. While Islamic ideology was based on religious nationalism, Pakistan ideology emphasized territorial unity in an attempt to check the separation of East Pakistan. However, once Bangladesh was independent, the real purpose of the creation and popularization of Pakistan ideology came to an end and a return was made to 'Islamic ideology'.

Textbook writers explain this as the basis of Muslim nationhood, the Islamic state, one's Islamic identity, and relate it to the Muslim Ummah. M. Akram Rabbani and Munwwar Ali Sayyid in *An Introduction of Pakistan Studies* write: "Pakistan ideology is based on the ideals of Islam." The result is that in the end, Islamic and Pakistan ideologies are merged and synthesized as one with the result that those who read it would think that those who founded Pakistan have all along struggled for the establishment of an Islamic state and not one where the rights of Muslims would be protected. The second important element is the so-called 'two nation' theory. Some zealous textbook writers trace the difference between Hindus and Muslims in the writings of Al Beruni. Quoting him, Gul Shahzad Sarwar writes: "The Hindus entirely differ from the Muslims in every aspect", forgetting the fact that at the time of Al Beruni there were few Muslims in the Indian subcontinent. Writing on two nations, nearly all writers keep in mind the modern concept of nationhood and analyze the separation between the Hindus and the Muslims along these lines. The fact is that in the medieval period the Muslim community was divided into a number of ethnic units and each unit had its own identity such as Mughals, Afghans,

Turks, Iranians, Arabs and so on. The Hindu community was also divided into a number of castes and sub-castes.

Actually, the British colonialists were the first who formulated the concept of communities on the basis of religion. According to their categorization, the Hindu community was vegetarian, peace loving and effeminate in character; while the Muslim community was meat-eating, violent, unmanageable, and disloyal.

Differences between the two communities were further created as a result of the census and the system of election which gave the idea to the Muslims that as a minority they would not be able to acquire political power. Therefore, if we look to the process of the formation of Muslim nationhood, we find that historically it began as a community then saw itself as a minority, and finally, in 1940, as a nation. The demand of a separate homeland was justified on the basis that Hindus and Muslims were two separate and different nations, therefore, they could not live together. The problem here was that while there was no harm in pointing out cultural, social or religious differences, it was dangerous and harmful to assert one group's superiority over the other on these bases. The result, as we witnessed, was an increase in fanaticism and mutual hatred and the sowing of the seeds of prolonged hostility and animosity.

Muhammad Islam Siddiq in his book *Ruh-i-Pakistan* (the Soul of Pakistan) gives a chart pointing out the differences between the two nations. According to him, the two have different religious beliefs, places of worship, sacred shrines, modes of worship, holy books, prophets, and while "the Hindus regard the water of Ganges as sacred the Muslim consider *zam zam* as holy; the Muslims venerate date-trees, olives and *ingir* (fig) while the Hindus revere the trees of *pepal* and *bargad*". He then goes on to enumerate cultural and social differences in dress, residential buildings, eating habits, and social and religious rituals and customs. In the end, the gullible reader ends up convinced that there was nothing in common between these two nations.

When Pakistan came into existence as a Muslim (or Islamic) nation state, its history was also made to wrap around a national framework. In writing the emphasis was given to the personalities and economic forces that had been instrumental in the creation of the new country. Consequently, instead of initiating new ideas in order to meet present-day challenges, the ruling elite and the so-called intellectuals relied heavily on the vision of those leaders who have become a part of history and whose concepts or thought are no longer relevant to the challenges of modern times. Further, some political dynasties are exploiting their much trumpeted "sacrifices" for the creation of Pakistan with an end to monopolizing the resources of the country.

Another important aspect of Pakistan Studies is projecting the wretchedness of the Muslims during the colonial period. According to these writings they were expressly kept backward through a British-Hindu "conspiracy". This concept had emanated from *The Hunter Commission Report* that highlighted the poverty and backwardness of Bengali Muslims but not those in the United Provinces where they were in privileged positions. However, the British-Hindu conspiracy legitimized the demand for a separate homeland where Muslims would be able to "enjoy freedom and economic well-being".

One of the characteristics of these textbooks is the language which is used to narrate and describe the events. The British and the Hindus are portrayed as arch-enemies who were for ever busy intriguing and conspiring against the Muslims. The Hindus were narrow-minded, prejudiced, full of hatred, fanatics, frauds and poisonous. According to this description, there was a common Hindu mentality whose representative is Kautalya, the author of the *Artha Shastra*.

Muslims, on the other hand, were tolerant, peaceful, friendly, and generous. They had these qualities because they were the children of the conquerors who had defeated the Hindu rulers of ancient India. On the basis of this description, there is a Hindu and a Muslim mentality beyond all class and

castes distinctions residing monolithic communities.

Keeping in view the course outline of Pakistan Studies, it is clear that the subject is taught descriptively and not analytically. This also makes it dull and uninteresting. As ideological compulsions tend to repudiate facts that go against this ideology, there is the need to distort history and to create a false consciousness among the learners. The final result being that though compulsory, the subject fails to satisfy an eager student's thirst for knowledge. This obvious consequence is the indifference and the pathos that we witness today among the new generation.

CONSPIRING AGAINST TAJ MAHAL

The medieval Indian history or 'the Muslim Rule' in India has become controversial and is being interpreted in different ways by different groups of historians. The nationalist historians regard it a part of the Indian history but the communalist historians, rejecting it, call it a foreign rule which, they claim, had "polluted" their history and culture and disrupted the continuity of their history. This perception is also applied to the historical monuments built during this period including Taj Mahal.

The communalists adopt two kinds of approaches to deal with this problem: to demolish them and vindicate the past humiliation, or to Hinduise them by distorting their history. Taj Mahal is one such monument which has become a victim of racial prejudice and ideological fanaticism.

The Europeans were the first to give credit of its beautiful design to the European architects. Sebastein Manrique who visited India during 1640-41, writes that "the architect of these works was a Venetian, by name Geronimo Veroneo, who had come to this part in a Portuguese ship and died in the city of Lahore before he reached it. Fame... had spread the story that the Emperor summoned him and informed him that he desired to erect a great and sumptuous tomb for his dead wife, and he required to erect a great design for this, for the Emperor's inspection. The architect Veroneo carried out his order and within a few days proved the great skill he had in his way of procuring several models of the most beautiful architecture."

It is interesting to note that during the 17th century when the Mughal Empire was at its zenith, the Europeans were reluctant to admit that the Indians were capable of building such a marvellous structure by having their own design.

When the British gained political domination of India it became very difficult for them to acknowledge the fact that India's past governance was better than their own rule. Attempts were made to distort history and achievements of the past rulers. They were portrayed as tyrants and despots. In their interpretation of Indian history, Taj Mahal, a monument of beauty and symbol of the artistic creativity, became controversial. Major Sleeman, a famous British administrator while visiting Agra in 1844 remarked that "the magnificent building [Taj Mahal] and all the palaces of Agra and Delhi were, I believe, designed by Austin de Bordeaux, a Frenchman of great talent and merit, in whose ability and integrity the Europeans placed much reliance."

In the wake of the rise of communalism in India and Hindutva's gaining political power in recent period, attempts are being made to disprove that Shahjahan was its builder. Numerous books and articles are being written to claim that Taj Mahal was never built by Shahjahan but that the building pre-dates Shahjahan era by several centuries and was originally built as a Hindu or Vedic temple. Shahjahan had only acquired it from its imagined owner called Jai Singh. P.N. Oak, a historian of dubious repute, wrote a book *Taj Mahal_ The True Story* in which he gives 109 evidences to prove that the Taj was a pre-existing Hindu temple. It is argued that Raja Paramardi Dev built the building as a Vedic temple at least 500 years earlier or in 1155.

The attitude of the British and the communalists towards Taj Mahal is indicative of their mindset. The British, after defeating the Indians, became the new rulers and showed much arrogance. They were convinced that the Indians were not capable of designing and building such a structure. They simply wanted to give the whole credit of its design to some European to feed to their racial superiority.

This interpretation implies that the Indians as subordinates simply carried out the construction of Taj Mahal in accordance with the design drawn up by a European architect and that they had no contribution of their own in its glory. The communalists' objective is to deprive the Mughals of any credit for being its original builder and instead present them as occupiers and usurpers. Their argument is that the Mughal took possession of the Hindu buildings and became their owners the same way as they occupied the country and became its rulers.

Taj Mahal witnessed many ups and downs in its life. The Mughals maintained it as long as they had resources and political power, but during the period of their decline it suffered not only from neglect and the forces of nature that ruined its gardens and watercourses but also at the hands of plunderers and looters who took away precious stones and valuable material which gave glamour to the building. During the early British rule, the Englishmen also joined the looters. Lord Curzon, the viceroy of India observed: "It was not an uncommon thing for the travellers to arm themsevles with hammer and chisel, with which they wiled away the afternoon by chipping out fragments of agate and carnelian from the cenotaphs of the Emperor and his lamented Queen."

After suffering the loot and robbery, Taj Mahal faced another crisis during the governorship of William Bentinck (1828-33) when it was decided to demolish all the Mughal monuments of Agra and Delhi and ship their marble to England for sale. Some of the pavilions of the Red Fort were stripped and their marble was shipped off to England. It was planned to demolish Taj Mahal and take away its marble. To accomplish this evil design, the machinery reached the garden of the Taj and preparations were made to start the work. Fortunately at the nick of time news came from London that the first auction of marble had failed and all further orders were cancelled. Taj Mahal, thus, survived just by sheer good luck.

Taj Mahal also found a lover and a patron in Curzon. He

restored its past glory by repairing its buildings, replacing the stones that had been plucked by people as souvenir and renovating its gardens. It emerged from dirt and dilapidation as a newborn baby.

However, the question who built Taj Mahal no longer remains a mystery. Surely it was not built by Shahjahan but by architects, calligraphers, masons, stonecutters, and metal workers and ordinary labourers who built it and made it a symbol of creative mind of the Indian society.

ROBBING IRAQ OF ITS HISTORY

This is a common phenomenon of history that imperial powers, after defeating their adversaries militarily, make systematic efforts to root out their historical heritage and thus reduce them to a state of intellectual and cultural powerlessness. By rendering the vanquished identity less, the victors curb and stifle their spirit of resistance. This process, moreover, facilities the assimilation of the defeated nation into the imperial culture. Thus, they can be made subservient to the victorious forces.

This happened in South America where the Inca, Maya, and Aztec civilizations and their historical monuments and artifacts were looted and destroyed. After the indigenous people were delinked from their past, they were assimilated into the imperial Spanish system. The same model was followed in North America and Australia where the local people were forced to forget, abandon, and shun their cultural roots before they were absorbed in the melting pot of the dominant European culture.

In the second model, the occupying forces plunder the archaeological and historical antiquities, manuscripts and documents of the country attacked and deposit them in their museums and libraries in order to control history and make the occupied nations dependent on the scholarship of imperial powers. Having resources and sources, they distort, mould, interpret and construct the history of colonial countries as it suits their interest.

The colonial powers of the 18th and 19th centuries adopted

this model in Asia and Africa to deprive their people of their historical heritage. When Napoleon invaded Egypt in 1799, he sent ships loaded with the Egyptian antiquities to France that are now on display in the Louvre Museum. The British Museum is another example that is the repository of looted archaeological and historical artifacts of the British colonies.

In the third model, which is followed by the Americans, the people are encouraged to steal and sell precious antiquities and manuscripts to their museums and libraries. It has become a booming business for private collectors to smuggle and get anything historically worth to purchase for high price. One example is Afghanistan. The Afghan Museum was plundered by criminal gangs and its antiquities are now sold in the world markets.

Following different models, the Americans are trying to use different tactics to make the Iraqi people powerless, historyless, and bereft of any sense of their cultural past. In world history, Iraq is known as 'the cradle of civilization'. It produced the Sumerian, Assyrian, Akkadian, and Babylonian civilizations with such great cities as Ur, Nineveh, and Babylon. It was the first civilization that introduced the cuneiform script, the decimal system in arithmetic and a lunar calendar. The Iraqis are proud of their past. They regard themselves as the inheritors of the oldest civilization and benefactors to humankind.

The Americans are now trying to snatch their pride and historical consciousness and reduce them to non-entity? The imperial forces have defeated them military but not culturally.

The problem with America is that as a nation it has achieved scientific and technological supremacy over the world. It has military and economic power. But it does not have a past and no glorious historical heritage. When it compares itself with the ancient nations of Asia and Africa it appears before them a pygmy and an insignificant nation that has no past traditions and institutions. To rectify this weakness, the

Americans are trying to collect and deposit in their own institutions important archaeological and historical antiquities and manuscripts by hook or by crook.

But this only makes them the collector but not the inheritor of past civilization. In Iraq, their aim seems to be not so much to get hold of their antiquities and destroy them, though that was the initial impression one got from the reports of the looting and plundering of the museums and libraries by the mobs. But in reality the gangs of looters are organized by vested interests to take away precious artifacts and sell them to private collectors. According to a group of British archaeologists they are "persuading the Pentagon to relax legislation that protects Iraq's heritage by preventing sales abroad".

In another report the American Council for Cultural Policy, a coalition of 60 collectors and dealers (like the coalition of occupying forces) met the Bush administration and argued that the post-Saddam Iraq should relax the antiquities laws. Now, there are confirmed reports that behind gangs of looters there is an organized mafia which is taking advantage of the anarchy to take away historical treasures from Iraq. All these activities have the blessing of the imperial and occupying forces.

The recent burning of the library in Baghdad which completely destroyed all precious manuscripts and documents is testimony to the policy of the occupying forces to deprive the Iraqi people of their history and their past. After giving details of the burning documents, manuscripts and rare books, Robert Fisk asked the question: "Why?" The answer is in the American psyche. In the first Gulf war of 1991, Goerge Bush Sr. condemned Iraq's invasion of Kuwait saying "the entire civilized world is against Iraq". His son Bush Jr. has repeatedly declared after 9/11 his aim to save and protect civilization. He has termed the present conflict as one between the civilized world that is America and the terrorists who are the people of the Middle East. The logical conclusion is that to preserve and protect its civilization, the

West would like to eliminate and wipe out other cultures and civilizations. Make other nations, especially those who are resisting American imperialism, historyless, pastless, and after silencing them, push them back to the stage of barbarism.

The American occupying forces are attempting to create a new model in Iraq by depriving the people of their cultural heritage and thus reduce them to a conglomerate of Shias, Sunnis and Kurds, who are at logger-heads and need a balancing power to maintain peace. Experience shows that once people lose their history, culture, and identity, they can be moulded according to the design of the occupying forces. Therefore, once, the Iraqi people are deprived of their historical sources, it would become impossible for them to reconstruct and reshape their history. It has been said that those who control the past also control the future. This is what the Americans are trying to do in Iraq.

OWNING AND DISOWNING OUR PAST

Medieval Indian history created a divide between Hindus and Muslims and polluted historiography with communal feeling, largely because both the communities had widely divergent perceptions of the period. James Mill called it the Muslim period in his *History of British India*, on the basis that the Muslim dynasties had ruled the subcontinent during this period.

Despite the tension it created between Hindu and Muslim observes of history, the term suits us. That is why we have adopted it readily in our historical narratives. Moreover, it became a matter of pride that we, Muslims, ruled over India for nearly one thousand years and kept the Hindus under our subjugation.

The historiography of the medieval Indian period first came to light during the struggle for freedom against the British when the nationalist historians, in order to prove the concept of one nation, projected it as a sign of the existence of a composite culture and common heritage. Allahabad University's history department played a significant role in these efforts and its historians contributed much to research on this period. However, their focus was on political rather than social or cultural history.

That the nationalists wanted to, in a sense' 'own' this period created some problems among the emerging Muslim middle class which was in search of a separate identity. As the medieval period became common to the Hindus and the

Muslims, they (the Muslim middle class) was reluctant to associate with this shared past. Jawaharlal Nehru analyzed this in his book *The Discovery of India*: "They searched their national roots elsewhere. To some extent, they found them in the Afghan and Mughal periods of India, but this was not quite enough to fill the vacuum. Those periods were common for Hindus and Muslims alike, and the sense of foreign intrusion had disappeared from Hindu minds. The Mughal rulers were looked upon as Indian national rulers... It is significant that Akbar, whom the Hindus especially admired, has not been approved of in recent years by some Muslims. When the 400th anniversary of his birth was celebrated in India all classes of people, including many Muslims, joined, but the Muslim League kept aloof because Akbar was a symbol of India's unity." (Akbar's 450th birthday was celebrated in 1992 at Delhi and Aligarh where nearly 60 historians specializing in the medieval Indian history presented their papers on different aspects of Akbar's reign.)

Nationalist historiography suffered in the 1920s as a result of communalism. It greatly damaged the shared values of both communities. History was politicized so much that it became an instrument of hate that polluted the relationship of the Hindus and Muslims. During this period, the Muslim elite classes selectively recognized the medieval period that suited their political interests. It was from this period that they resurrected the Arabs and the Turkish conquerors as their heroes to inspire the community, and to present them as role models in their confrontation with the Hindus. Interestingly, the most admired heroes were invaders such as Muhammad bin Qasim, Mahmud of Ghazni, and Shahbuddin Ghauri. After partition, we inherited this communal approach and it still dominates our historical perspective.

In India, the Aligarh school of history radicalized the study of medieval history. The historians of this school interpreted the period in its social, cultural, and economic contexts and argued that India progressed as a result of new technological

and scientific innovations brought to the subcontinent by the Turks. It was proved that with the exception of one or two rulers, all ruling dynasties followed secular policies with religion in a sub-ordinate role.

However, recently, the emergence of the BJP and its extremist Hindutva ideology has rejected the Indianization of the medieval period. This period is regarded as foreign rule which was a disaster and catastrophic for India. This hatred against the rule of Muslim dynasties was a primary reason for the demolition of the Babri mosque in Ayodhya. The retrogressive steps employed by the BJP combine can also be seen in recent changes made to history textbooks, ostensibly to 'purify' Indian history of foreign elements.

The study and understanding of the medieval period also suffered on this side of the border. The existing territories of the centre of power and, therefore, mostly exploited by the ruling elite that created political unrest from time to time in these areas. There were rebellions against Mughal rule in the NWFP. Anti-Mughal sentiments are fully evident in the poetry of Khushal Khan Khattak. Sindh was also not happy at the way it was occupied by Akbar and later on ruled by his successors. The exploitation carried out by the Mughal governor during Shahjahan's rule is narrated in *Mazhar Shahjahani* by Yusuf Mirak.

Moreover, once we chose to withdraw from the Indian subcontinent (in terms of identifying ourselves), we have lost all interest in the medieval period which has become alein to us. There is also a state policy to cut off all links to the Indian subcontinent and trace our historical and cultural roots to Central Asia. The rise of religious extremism has further made this period less attractive as fundamentalists regard it as polluted with Hindu cultural influences. They turn their attention to the Islamic history and get inspiration from it.

There is no hope of any substantial contribution to an understanding or study of medieval Indian history from

Pakistani historians. This is because our educational institutions hardly undertake any kind of worthwhile research. Since 1947, only about four or five theses are submitted every year for a Ph.D. degree and most of them are unfit for publication. However, there is some hope in India where the tradition of historiography has become very strong and the medieval period, in spite of its controversy, is an era in which several historians have shown considerable interest.

WHY DO WE CALL ALEXANDER 'GREAT'?

Some authors have rightly observed that those who despise knowledge are ultimately destroyed by knowledge. It is a fact, which can hardly be disputed, that those societies which remain in a state of ignorance decline socially, politically and economically and disappear in the oblivion of history unceremoniously.

As Foucault says that "Knowledge is power, and power is knowledge". It means that those who keep away from it, become vulnerable and could be dominated by those who have it. This is evident from history. It happened in the past and will continue to happen in future.

However, important thing is not only to acquire knowledge but also to create it. To acquire knowledge means to buy a ready-made commodity for consumption. In this process the consumer does not take any part in creating, producing or manufacturing knowledge. Therefore, a nation enjoys prestige and dignity only when it contributes to knowledge system that could benefit humanity as a whole. In case of consumption, it is mere imitation, as most of our early Muslim intellectuals did when they translated the Greek books and made an attempt to apply their philosophy to Islamic theology.

As consumers of knowledge they failed to produce any radical or revolutionary movement in the Islamic society. The Mu'tazila sect, influenced by the Greek thoughts, remained effective as long as the rulers patronized it. Once the policy of the succeeding ruler changed, the whole sect and its

intellectual process that initiated debates, discussions, and polemics and stimulates society to think and to argue. This process subsequently leads society to intellectual maturity.

Here, I would like to give an example of the present historiography that has evolved and developed in the West. It is organized as a discipline with laws and regulations as to how to edit manuscripts; how to compare contradictory evidence and determine their validity; how to read text and interpret its meaning; and how to detect falsehood in the manuscripts and correct it? And by keeping and adhering all these rules write and interpret history objectively as far as possible.

The problem with the Asian and African historians who study in the Western universities and learn research methodology of writing history, tend to apply it to their own historical narratives. They construct history on the model of the West. That is why one European historian says: "How can somebody create a new history as all history is the history of Europe which is masculine and white in character."

Take the example of Marxist periodisation of history that divides it into slavery, feudalism, and capitalism. When an attempt was made to divide the Indian history on this line, it proved disastrous and misleading because in India slavery and feudalism existed in quite different shapes. Later, Kosambi and other modern Marxist historians corrected the periodisation and chronology of the Indian history. D.D.Kosambi provides a pattern for writing Indian history. He says: "History is defined as the presentation, in chronological order, of successive developments in the means and relations of production."

When the Western historians write our history, they apply the same terminology that are common in their historiography. To understand the historical characters, they compare them with their Western counterparts. For example, Vincent Smith writing on the Indian history compares the military adventures of Samandara Gupta with Napoleon.

This comparison goes on and Kalidas is equated to Shakespeare.

It is quite misleading to understand our historical characters. In case of comparison, they lose their own identity and are linked with those characters that belong to some other age and other countries. For instance, Alexander, who invaded India and brought havoc to the subcontinent, is regarded as Great. Such is the impact of these historical writings that most of our historians just follow this pattern and liberally use these terms to explain history.

The European historical model is so deeply ingrained in our mind that we always try to understand the process of history with Eurocentric perspective. For example, four important periods that brought radical change in the European history are Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, and Industrialisation. While studying history within the framework of these periods, we come to believe that this is the only process of development and progress which should be followed by the Asian and African countries.

So, first of all there should be a Renaissance in our society. It is so fascinating a concept that the Muslim intellectuals have several times claimed that there was Renaissance in the Islamic world that could bring radical changes in structure of Muslim society.

Similarly, the intellectuals always regard Reformation as panacea for religious backwardness and lament that since there has been no reformation in Islam, there is such extremism and orthodoxy in religion. However, they fail to understand that the phenomena of Renaissance and Reformation were both product of different environments and could not be applied to Islam. In Renaissance, humanism rejected the divine authority and made man responsible for his destiny. This cannot be applied to Islam. Reformation was possible in Christianity as there was an institution of church that could be challenged. There is no such institution, so the process to reform is not possible.

The term of Renaissance is also misused in other cases, such

as in Bengal the intellectual awakening of the 19th century is described as Renaissance. The historian Koff raises the question that as it was revival of language, history and customs, so should it be called Renaissance or nationalism?

It is also believed that in case of industrialization society would get rid of old and obsolete traditions and institutions. Democracy would follow the suit. However, we forget that mere adoption of technology and setting up factories cannot change mindset of society. Therefore, the question is how to change it? History is a powerful subject and if historical narratives are rewritten not on the model of Western historiography but based on original pattern that suits our process of history, we could retrieve the past that we have lost during the colonial period.

We have to reject the nationalist version of history that is the product of reaction against colonial domination and as such justifies each and everything as great and admirable and eulogises rulers and generals as heroes. It also conceals corruption and mismanagement of post-independent governing classes in order to glorify nation.

In India, historians are trying to rewrite their history with a liberal and progressive point of view. At the same time, they are also fighting against the retrogressive version of history propagated by the BJP. In this way history is playing an important role in creating political and social consciousness in Indian society.

In Pakistan, we are not producing any knowledge and not rewriting history to fill the gaps which were left unattended during the colonial period. We are relying on a history that is written by foreign historians and repeating their version in our books, journals, and media. As we do not create knowledge, we import it and want to use it like other commodities; this reliance makes us intellectually barren and bankrupt. The dictum that "knowledge destroys them, who despise knowledge" aptly applies on us. Are we ready for destruction?

LANGUAGE OF POWER

Then American President George W. Bush speaks and uses a language that contains threat, contempt and aggressiveness; it is not a new phenomenon. Creation of a new vocabulary such as Axis of Evil, War against Terrorism, preemptive attack, war combatants and change of regime indicates the hidden motives of America to establish its hegemony and domination.

Bush's continuous reference to the American people of their greatness and American values are meant to create an enthusiasm and get popular support. Nations are charmed by glory and greatness, and the Americans are no different than other nations of the past who sacrificed everything to achieve grandeur and majesty to become superpowers. In this respect, Bush is following in the footsteps of past conquerors and aggressors who unleashed the forces of war and destruction, and laid down the bases of their Great Empires on ashes. Power, in the words of Lord Acton, not only corrupts absolutely, but also blinds absolutely and prevents to look around and understand 'others'.

History is replete with examples of those individuals and nations who, after acquiring military power, assumed the role of conquerors and arrogantly referred to weak rulers as imbecile, coward, corrupt and cruel. They challenged them, knowing fully well that they could not respond. To humiliate them was enjoyment for powerful and mighty persons. Intoxicated by power, they asked others to correct their

behaviour and act obediently as their subordinates.

Power does not believe either in equality with weaker powers or settle disputes after negotiation. War is the ultimate goal to defeat the enemy and get the desired results. Therefore, the opponents are challenged to fight and face the consequences. We find the same process in nearly all the great empires that in their heyday invaded countries, occupied them and returned with war booty to boost the morale of their people. As a result of conquest and colonization, a new language emerged that glorified victors and humiliated the vanquished.

There is one interesting example of Caliph Harun al-Rashid. On his succession to the throne, the Byzantinian emperor, Nicephorus 1 (802-811), after repudiating the treaty that was signed by his predecessor, asked Harun to return the tribute already paid to him. The Caliph became so angry that he ordered to bring ink and pen immediately and wrote this on the back of the letter: "From Harun, the commander of the believers, to Nicephorus, the dog of a Roman. Verily, I have read the letter, O' son of an infidel mother. As for the answer, it shall be for thine eye to see, not for thine ear to hear. Salam."

Interestingly, such language created a pride among the nation that possessed military power and even today, after reading it, we are enthralled to know that how the mighty Abbassid empire humiliated the great Byzantinian king. Another example is the letters that were exchanged between Timur and the Ottoman Sultan, Yildrim. Both, regarding themselves powerful and conquerors of the world, addressed each other with contempt and hatred, ready to match their military power with each other.

In the modern period, Napoleon set an example of a powerful man who usurped power and rose from a humble person to the status of an emperor. Once all power was concerted in his person, the French military became powerful enough to

defeat all European rulers. As secretly the rulers of Europe hated him, he left no chance to humiliate them. He used to say: "I found the crown of France lying on the ground and I picked it up with my sword." The message was that a crown without power was a simple piece of ornament. It was power that made the crown meaningful. Realizing the sacrifices of his soldiers, he eulogized their services.

After getting victory at Austerlitz in 1805, he addressed his soldiers thus: "Soldiers! I am satisfied with you. In the battle of Austerlitz you have justified all my expectations of your intrepidity. You have adorned your eagles with important glory." As a conqueror of Europe, he changed the map of the continent according to his liking. In 1806, he created four new kings, two of them his brothers. He had his own concept of power. Some of his sayings show how he looked at solutions of problems: "The strong are good; the weak are wicked"; "Men must be led by an iron hand in a velvet glove"; "There is only one thing to do in this world, and that is to keep acquiring more and more money and power"; "My mistress is power, but it is as an artist that I love power. I love it as a musician loves his violin"; and "Conquest has made me what I am and conquest alone can maintain me."

In modern European history, Napoleon became a model of conquerors and dictators such as Hitler and Mussolini, who followed him and behaved like him in their treatment of conquered people. There is an interesting speech of Hitler that can be applied to all imperialists who want to conquer the world: "As a whole, and at all times, the efficiency of the truly national leader consists primarily in preventing the division of the attention of people, and always in concentrating on a single enemy... It is part of the genius of a great leader to make adversaries of different fields appears as always belonging to one category only, because to weak and unstable characters the knowledge that there are various enemies will lead only too easily to incipient doubts to their own cause....

Also, with this comes the first paralysis of their own strength. Therefore, a number of essentially different enemies must always be regarded as one in such a way that in the opinion of the masses of one's own adherents the war is being waged against one enemy alone. This strengthens the belief in one's own cause and increases one's bitterness against the attacker."

IT'S TIME TO LIBERATE HISTORY

Reasons for why we need to go back into our past vary from society to society. An industrial and technologically advanced society, which is moving ahead, looks to future rather than past to realize its achievements. On the other hand, a society, which remains stagnant and fails to create or invent anything to contribute to humankind, looks of its past to seek refuge in its constructed glory.

So, there are differing views on the role of history in different societies. In the first abovementioned case, it cuts its roots in the past and lets a society to advance its interests ruthlessly without drawing any lesson from the past; in the second case, a decadent society finds solace in its past and survives on false notion of its lost glory.

J.H.Plumb in his book *The Death of the Past,* writes that an industrial society "does not need the past and requires no sanction in the past and no roots in it." Why is it so? G. Woodward writing in *The Future of the Past* observes that: "The more positive motives behind manipulations of the past include desires to enhance lineage, pedigree, national pride, or status by means of ennobling the past."

Therefore, when a society does not require sanction from the past of lineage, privileges and status and relies on an individual's talent, equality and fundamental rights, history ceases to play its role as protector of elite classes. Or when a nation is more advanced and acquires greater prestige in the present than what it had in the past, again, history becomes less significant and less attractive.

That is why historians have debated on the significance and truthfulness of the past. Is it constructed for the interests of some classes or for whole society? How far its construction is reliable? "Past is not discovered and found. It is created and represented by the historians as a text," writes Alan Munslow. According to another historian, "The past is unknowable; all we can know about it is from historians' writings; so history disappears and we are left with historiography as a species of literary endeavour." If this is the case, how can history play any positive role? That is why the result has been that it lost its credibility and its mission to create consciousness.

Popularity of history, in the words of R.J.Evans, has further reduced when "in the search for scientific accuracy and methodological sophistication, historians began to cut themselves off from the wider reading public... And increasing number of university based historians found that, with more or less the same amount of history to go around as before, to conduct original research means focusing on smaller and smaller subjects."

Therefore, history has reached a stage where it had to find new routes to go ahead or to disappear in oblivion. In 1966, Edward Thompson wrote an article titled *History from Below* which gave a new life to history, opened vast avenues to historians for conducting research. Thomson commenting on it writes: "I am seeking to rescue the poor stockinger, the luddite, cropper, the 'obsolete' hand-loom weaver, the 'utopian' artisan,... from the enormous condescension of posterity."

The new concept proved to be a break through and provided a vast arrary of new topics to historians that renewed the interest in history. To make history popular, some historians came out of their higher educational institutions and wrote popular history books in simple language and with fewer references. Later, the media provided them ample opportunities to directly reach the people. A.J.Tylor's lectures on television created an interest about historical subjects

among the viewers. Mobilizing interest among the larger sections of society, history continued to broaden its boundaries and included in its agenda subjects such as human emotions and sentiments.

History has now made such advances that some historians claim that nothing is beyond their grip. Recently, history of women and history of environment were introduced which has again opened new areas of interest to historians. Both topics are not only enriching history but also creating new consciousness among the readers. Both history from below and women's history include those sections of society in history that were earlier excluded. History no longer remains a monopoly of the elite and male-dominated discipline; it has become popular and attracts wider sections of readers.

In the case of Pakistan, there is doubtless an urgent need to look back into our past, not for mere taking pride in some of its glorious aspects but to analyze the causes of our downfall and decline. Why has our society become so stagnant and lost all its vitality and vigour? The roots of this decline lie in our past which had been full of intrigues, corruption and exploitation by our ruling classes. Lust for power, monopolization of all resources by a few, deprivation and denigration of common-folks were some of the prominent features of our past. Another aspect of great interest is how the ruling classes failed to defend and protect their people in the event of invasions but did not protect their status and privileges by accepting humiliating surrenders. If this shameful chapter of our history is made known to our people by writing books, it would deter the current ruling classes from performing a similar role to earn legitimacy of their power.

Therefore, the answer is in the affirmation that we need history, but first of all, it should be liberated from the stranglehold of state ideology. To write history from below we need independent research institutes that can allow scholars to pursue their research without any state intervention. Moreover, there is also a need for changing the

whole pattern of history writing as most of our historians write traditional history: they are not fully aware of the recent developments of ideas and trends in the discipline. That is why the state and politicians use such history to get sanction from the past for their power and privileges. Therefore, to contest it and correct it, there is need for writing a comprehensive history of Pakistani society that should include the role of common people in shaping history. Only then, history will fulfil the needs of our society.

WILL BAGHDAD RISE AGAIN?

It is a phenomenon of history that cities pass through political and social upheavals, internal as well as external and, consequently, some of them perish but others survive along with their past heritage.

Baghdad is one such city which had, over the centuries, withstood the internal anarchy and foreign invasions and has survived and retained its identity. It was founded in 762 by the Abassid Caliph Al-Mansur (754-775) as his new capital and named it as *dar al-salam* or the city of peace.

It was built in round shape with four gates indicating the rule over four corners of the world. The caliph's palace, known as *Dar al Zahab* (golden palace), and the Jama' mosque were impressive building showing temporal and spiritual power of the Caliphate. There was a green dome (*Qubbat al-khidra*) as a part of the palace along with a statue of a horseman holding a lance showing the readiness to defend the city.

Al-Mansur visualised it a city for defence as well as for commercial activities and remarked: "It is excellent as a military camp. Besides, here is the Tigris to put us in touch with lands as far as China and bring us all that the seas yield as well as the food products of Mesopotamia, Armenia and their environs. Then there is the Euphrates to carry for us all that Syria, al-Raqqah and the adjacent lands have to offer."

The city flourished under the Abbasid caliphs and soon became a cosmopolitan city where people from Iran, Central Asia, China, and India came for trade and commerce. Its

cultural and cosmopolitan culture is beautifully depicted in *Thousand and One night* as "Whose charm is not faded in spite of its age".

The city faced its first jolt during the civil war between Amin (800-813) and Ma'mun (813-817) when it was besieged by Tahir, the commander of Ma'mun. The city suffered 14-month-siege and when it refused to surrender, it was partly destroyed by Tahir. And, when Ma'mun entered as a victor, the city was deserted. He repaired the damaged buildings and brought back the city to life again.

During the later period of the Abbasid rule, the city suffered at the hands of Turkish slaves who became powerful and unruly. That was the period when all types of crooks and *ayyar* (thugs) became famous for their notoriety. The period also witnessed sectarian conflicts that made the life of the city intolerable. Taking advantage of the weaknesses of the caliphs, the city was captured first by Buids and then the Saljuqs. Baghdad survived during all these unfavourable circumstances.

In the 12th and 13th centuries, the Muslim world faced great challenge from the Mongols who wrought havoc on Central Asia and Iran and uprooted the Muslim dynasties and destroyed all cultural centres of the Muslims. In 1253, Hulagu Khan, the grandson of Gengis Khan, invaded first Almut, the centre of the Ismailis, and asked the Caliph Musta'sim to come for his help. He did not get any response.

So, after finishing his campaign against the Ismailis, he asked the caliph to demolish the outer walls of Baghdad and surrender to him. Receiving no reply, he marched into the capital city in 1258. The vazir of the caliph, ibn al-Qama, appeared before him and asked for the conditions of surrender. Hulagu Khan refused to see him. He also ignored the warning that if there was any violation of the city of peace and mistreatment of the caliph the "whole universe would be disorganized". He was told that "the sun hides its face, rain ceases and plants grow no more." Without paying any heed

to such warnings he attacked, captured the caliph, wrapped him in a carpet and strangulated to death.

All his 300 officials were murdered. The invaders engaged in plunder and loot. The inhabitants of the city, including men, women and children were killed. Houses, bazaars and libraries were set on fire. It was estimated that nearly 100,000 people were massacred mercilessly. It was for the first time in the history of the Muslims that there existed no caliph whose name could be recited in the *khutba* (Friday sermon).

To calm the wrath of the invaders, the ulema of Baghdad issued a *fatwa* that a just unbeliever ruler was better than an just Muslim ruler. Sa'di Shirazi, the Persian poet, was so much shocked by the incident that he composed a moving poem on the destruction of Baghdad that turned out to be a masterpiece of the Persian literature.

Since then, Baghdad could not regain its old glory. It remained for some time under Il-Khani rulers of the Mongol origin.

In 1508, the Safavid ruler Shah Ismail captured it and made a part of his kingdom. Then it came under the Ottomans who made it a *vilayat* of their Empire. After the First World War, it became capital of the Hashmite dynasty under Faisal. Later, it witnessed a number of political coups by the military and intolerably suffered under several dictators. In 1991, Baghdad was partly destroyed during the US-led invasion.

Baghdad is once again facing a new 'invasion'. But this time it is more ominous as the new invaders are equipped with modern technology and lethal weapons of mass destruction. The question is: "Will Baghdad survive it and rise again as it did in the past?"

YES, HE DID MASSACRE AND PLUNDER INDIANS

It is difficult to understand why a controversy on Ahmad Shah Abdali's role during his Indian campaigns is being raised these days and the Afghan king being presented as a hero by some and an invader and a marauder by others. Whatever the reasons, the fact remains that those who judge him from an ethnocentric point of view, for them he was the founder of modern Afghanistan and a great Afghan (popularly he is called *baba*) who defeated the Indians and conquered their territories.

And those who see his achievements in religious perspective, for them he was a great conqueror who defeated the Marathas at the Battle of Panipat in 1761 and liberated the Muslims from their political domination. But those who assess his career purely from a historical point of view, they will find him an aggressor who invaded India only for the sake of plunder and loot and inflicted great political, social and economic losses on the people of the Indian subcontinent.

We need to understand that foreign invasions always bring havoc, chaos, and disruption to occupied territories. It we absolve our (Muslim) invaders from crimes and instead start eulogizing them, it creates false historical consciousness leaving no space for us to learn anything from history. In case of invaders and aggressors there should be no distinction between 'ours' and 'theirs'. They should be treated purely within historical parameters and their crimes should be exposed and condemned.

Ahmad Shah Abdali (1722-1773) was with Nadir Shah when

the latter invaded India in 1739 and participated in all his Indian campaigns and subsequent lootings. Therefore, his main motive to invade India, when he assumed power after the assassination of Nadir Shah, was purely to plunder what his patron had left behind and nothing else.

Leaving aside the accounts of his Punjab, Sindh and Blochistan campaigns, I would like to concentrate on his invasion of North India and occupation of Delhi in 1757 and in 1761. That was the period when the Mughal Empire had lost its military power and failed to protect its imperial capital from the Afghan army. After the invasion, Abdali's first victim was the population of Mathura, the holy city of the Hindus. The contemporary chronicles describe that the occupation army demolished the houses, broke the idols, massacred male population and raped helpless women.

Next was the Gokul city and then Agra where his general Jahan Khan not only slaughtered the inhabitants but also levied heavy fines on those who were fortunate enough to survive. Leaving a trail of devastation and destruction behind him, Abdali entered the imperial capital and launched a systematic campaign to plunder the city. The author of *Tarikh-i-Alamgiri* gives details of looting.

According to him, a centre was set up to collect fines from the citizens near Katra Soshan-al-Daula. Letters were sent to the rich people to come to the office and pay the imposed fine. On every street and market a *kulahposh* was posted who counted the houses and shops and demanded money according to their financial status. Torture and beating was a common practice to extort money. As a result, many people committed suicide; many died because of torture. To find hidden treasure, the soldiers demolished the houses and dug the floors and no one was spared.

It is estimated that a total amount of money which Abdali took from India was between 3 and 12 cores of rupees. The booty not only included jewels, ornaments, diamonds, and other precious things but also the Mughal princesses. He

wanted to marry Hazrat Mahal, the daughter of Muhammad Shah.

According to J.Sarkar in his *The Fall of the Mughal Empire.* "This tender lamb was to be pounced upon by a fierce Afghan of grandfatherly age whose two ears docked and nose was rotting from a leprous carbuncle." There was resistance in the harem. The royal family threatened to kill her. He was told that she was not beautiful and was already engaged to a prince. However, all efforts to save her from the clutches of the Afghan failed. He married her forcibly.

Two widows of Muhammad Shah and the daughter of Ahmad Shah accompanied her to Afghanistan. Besides them, there were other Mughal princesses who were forced to accompany the Afghan army. They included Affatun Nisa, who was married to Nadir Shah's son in 1739 and whom Ahmad Shah married after the death of Nadir. Sarkar quotes from a Marathi letter which says: "The Pathan has taken away the handsome wives of the Amirs". There was such a large-scale loot of the capital that it took 28,000 camels, elephants, mules, and carts to carry Abdali's booty.

Shah Waliuallh (d.1762), who later invited Abdali to invade India, was in Delhi and wrote letters to his friends seeking help for his safety. In one of his letters he writes: "When the Shah (Durrani) marches against India, you should write to some of your sincere friends in the Durrani's army that so and so (Shah Waliullah) is in Delhi. Should the Durrani's army suddenly enter Delhi, some of his guards should be posted for his (Shah Waliullah's) protection. By way of protection it would be better to depute a student to the Durrani's army, in order that he might warn the army in time to protect the sincere friend (Shah Waliullah)." In spite of his acts of plunder and atrocities, which was personally witnessed by Shah Waliullah, he wrote a letter to Abdali to invade India against the Marathas.

Most of the Pakistani textbook historians eulogize Abdali as a great *mujahid* who defeated the *kafir* Marathas in the third

battle of Panipat (1761). However, historians of South Asia point out that the benefit of the Marathas' defeat went to the East India Company and not the Mughals. After the battle of Panipat, Abdali came to Delhi as a conqueror and resided at the Red Fort along with his wives and held court in the *Diwan-i-Khass* of Shahjahan. He and his army did not spare the city from pillage and rapine.

Mir Taqi Mir narrates the tribulations of the inhabitants of Delhi in his autobirography *Zikr-i-Mir,* in these words: "In the evening Raja Nagar Mal (Mir's patron) left the city, and in due course reached the fort of Suraj Mal (the Jat ruler). I stayed behind to look after my family. After evening, a proclamation was made that Shah Abdali had granted security to all, and that none of citizens should be in any fear. But as night had scarely fallen when the outrages began. Fires were started in the city and houses were burnt down and looted.

"The following morning there was all uproar and confusion. The Afghans and Rohillas (Najib's soldiers) started the work of slaughter and plunder, breaking down doors, tying up those they found inside, and in many cases burning them alive or cutting off their heads. Everywhere was bloodshed and destruction, and for three days and three nights this savagery continued. The Afghans would leave no article of food or clothing untouched."

"They broke down walls and roofs of the houses, ill-treated and tormented the inhabitants. The city was swarming with them. Men who were pillars of the state were brought to nothing; men of noble rank left destitute; family men bereft of all their loved ones. Most of them moved the streets amid insult and humiliation. Men's wives and children were made captive, and the killing and looting went on unchecked. The Afghans humiliated and abused their victims and practised all kinds of atrocities upon them. Nothing that could be looted was spared, and some would strip their victims even of their underclothing. The new city (Shahjahanabad) was ransacked."

Mir Taqi Mir further writes how the old city of Delhi was plundered by the occupation army of Abdali. "For seven or eight days the tumult raged. Nobody was left with cloth to wear or with enough food even for a single meal. Many died of the wounds that they had received, while others suffered greatly from the cold. The looter would carry of men's stores of grain and then sell it at an extortionate price to those who needed it."

"The cry of the oppressed rose to heaven but the king (Abdali), who considered himself a pillar of true religion, was quite unmoved. A large number of people left and many of them died. Others were carried off by force to the invader's camp. I, who was already poor, became poorer... my house, which stood on the main road was razed to ground."

This was the legacy of Ahmad Shah Abadali, the great warrior and conqueror that he left behind in India. If still he is to be regraded as a hero or saint, then we shall have to change the meaning of both words. (Those who wish to know more about Abdali may refere to Ganda Singh's excellent book *Ahmad Shah Abdali*).

HOW COW BECAME POLITICIZED

D.N.Jha, Professor of History, at Delhi University wrote a book on the attitude of the people towards beef-eating in early period of Indian history and proved on the basis of religious and historical evidence that the Indians slaughtered cow on religious occasions and consumed beef. Sacredness of cow evolved with the passage of time as a result of its utility in an agricultural society whereupon people started to venerate it and attached a religious sanctity to it. The book created such an uproar against the author that the government provided a guard to protect him.

This issue of cow-slaughter appeared as a religious issue during the Saltanat period when the Muslims, who were beef-eaters, slaughtered cow for their consumption in their daily life as well as of festival occasions. As political power was in their hand, there was little protest against this practice. However, during the rule of Muhammad Tughluq (1325-1351), Ibn Battuta, the North African traveller, who visited India reports about a communal clash on cow-slaughter in which the enraged Hindu mob attacked those who were involved in the slaughter and burnt them alive.

When Babur (1526-1530) conquered India and, in spite of his short rule, realized the importance and sacredness of cow among the Hindus in the Indian society, he instructed his son Humayun in his testament that: "It is incumbent that religious bigotries should be wiped off the table of heart, and justice meted out to each religion according to its own tenets. Specially, abstain from sacrifice of cow as this would tend to

Christianity, arrived. Regarding Islamic societies, he believed that they were on the decline and, after losing their energies, were on the brink of collapse. Avrill Powell, in her book, *Muslims and Missionaries in Pre-Mutiny India,* writes: "The vulnerability of the Muslim world, and the concomitant political and economic strength of Europe, he diagnosed in socio-political terms as of their contrasting dominant religious values." Therefore, his belief was that the Muslim aristocracy, Ulema and common people were in a sate of decline and doubting their religion would be converted to Christianity easily.

This time the challenge of the Christian missionaries was more powerful as they had the patronization of politician power. The Uelma also surprised that they had to defend their religion on the basis of reason, and not on emotions. Therefore, they took full advantage of those translations of the Bible that the missionaries did for their preaching. The man who emerged as a prominent figure in these *monazira* was not a religious scholar but a medicine doctor, Wazir Khan, who, to respond to the challenges of missionaries, studied all those books which were published in Europe and critical to the tenets of Christianity. Fully equipped with modern knowledge, he defeated Pfander in a number of debates that finally forced him to leave India.

In this respect, the 19th century was important because as a result of religious debates, some Ulema reinterpreted Islam to adjust its teaching according to modern values. Specially, Sir Syed and Maulvi Chiragh Ali made attempts not only to defend Islam from missionaries, but interpreted it with a progressive point-of-view. However, their views failed to attract the majority of Muslims and soon the Ulema of Deoband, with their orthodox ideas, influenced the Indian Muslim community. Consequently, our Ulema reached the same stage where the Ulema in Akbar's court were. Their view of the world became limited, which prevented them from understanding the ongoing modern trends.

AKBAR'S IBADAT KHANA

In the medieval period, religious intolerance was regarded as a virtue and tolerance as a vice. Bossuet, one of the famous theologians of the period, proudly claimed that Catholicism was the least tolerant of all religions. Intolerance, it was believed, was the best method to protect faith and keep the followers away from any heresy.

This situation changed only when the 'Age of Reason' began and new ideas and thoughts had challenged faith and promoted rationality to judge all aspects of life. Enlightenment, Renaissance, industrialization and growth of secular ideas became a threat to religious beliefs.

A more serious threat emerged from the Communist ideology, that alarmed clerics of all religions into finding out ways and means to defend their faith. Subsequently, to save and preserve religious beliefs and to counter the challenges of atheistic trends, they initiated 'inter-religious dialogues' to create a close relationship among the followers of different religions. The outcome of this policy is to find commonalities in different religions and accommodate them in a broader framework of tolerance and mutual understanding.

When Europe was following a policy of religious intolerance, Akbar, in India, introduced the policy of *Sulh-i-kul* (peace with all) and established an institution known as *Ibadat khana* or the house of worship in 1575 at his newly built capital, Fathpursikri, to hold debates on different aspects of Islam.

On every Thursday, he invited Sayyeds, Shaikhs and nobles

to come and take part in religious discussions. He made elaborate plan for sitting arrangement as Badayuni in *Muntakhab-al-Tawarikh* writes: "The Amirs should sit on the east side, the Sayyeds on the west, the Ulema on the south, and the Shaikh on the north. His majesty would go from time to time to these various parties, converse with them and ascertain their thought." In case of a need for references, books were available from the royal library.

The discussion on the history of Islam, jurisprudence (*Fiqh*), and *Ahadith*, the traditions of the Holy Prophet (PBUH), made the *Ibadatkhana* a battleground for the Ulema who started accusing and declaring each other nonbeliever. Two leading Ulema, Mulla Abdullah Sultanpuri and Abdunnabi Sadr, who once had a great influence on Akbar, failed to respond to the challenges of Abul Fazl, who arrived at the court in 1575 and became a powerful debater at the *Ibadatkhana*. He made his adversaries speechless and contemptuously remarked that "bigoted Ulema and the routine lawyers were shamed."

Later on, the entry of Shia scholars, such as Hakim Abul Fath Gilani and Mir Sharif Amuli, introduced a different interpretation of Islam. He was also disgusted at the wrangling and quarrelling of the Ulema on minor issues.

However, these discussions created so much interest in him that according to Badayuni: "He used to spend much time in the *Ibadatkhana* in the company of learned men and Shaikhs. And specially on Friday nights, he would sit up there the whole night continually occupied in discussing questions of religion, whether fundamental or collateral." It was quite natural that on hearing different interpretations he was confused and remarked: "I wished I had not heard such difference of option from teachers of traditional subjects, nor confounded by different interpretation of the Quranic verses and the *Ahadith*."

Therefore, not satisfied with the discussions which took place among the Ulema and to know more about other religions and their teachings, he invited prominent theologians of

different faiths to come to the *Ibadatkhana* and take part in discussions.

There came learned Brahmans, Pushottam and Debi, who explained the tenets of Brahmanism. They were followed by Jain Clerics, under whose influence he prohibited slaughter of animals for certain days. Zoroastrian scholar Dastur Maharji Rana unfolded the intricacies of his religion and so, according to Badayuni, Akbar was so much impressed by Zoroastrianism that he "ordered Abul Fazl to make arrangements that sacred fire should be kept burning at the court at all hours of the day according to their customs."

His curiosity led him to invite Christian fathers from Goa to come to his court and teach him about their religion. The first Christian mission, under the leadership of Father Aquaviva, reached Fathpursikri in 1780. Father Monserrate, a member of the mission, wrote an excellent commentary of his journey to the Mughal court and about the activities of his mission. The fathers took part in various discussions at the *Ibadatkhana*. About these debates, Father Monserrate write: "The fathers and the religious leaders of the Musalmans held frequent debates concerning an infinite variety of points__ the Trinity, God, the Son, his death... the Day of judgment, death, resurrection, and various philosophical and political subjects. However, be it recorded without pride or boasting that, by the help of God, the fathers so effectually silenced their opponents that they frequently demanded miraculous portends as the proof of truth of Christianity." Though the fathers used very abusive language during the discussion, Akbar and his courtiers tolerated it and allowed them to speak freely.

The experiment of *Ibadatkhana* was unique in the medieval history. On one hand it brought to light the fanaticism of the theologians who rejected other religions and insisted on truthfulness of their's. On the other hand, these discussions created an atmosphere in which religious scholars brought their points of view freely without any hindrance. These inter-religious dialogues created tolerance which helped

Akbar construct his policy of *Sulh-i-kul* to rule onver India.

There is a general misunderstanding that Akbar invented a new religion. The term *Din-i-Ilahi* was coined by Mohsin Fani in his book *Dabistan-I-Mazahib,* written during Jahagir's period. Abul Fazl calls it *Ain-I-Rahnamuni* (regulation for guidance). His policy of religious tolerance suited India, as followers of different religions lived there. Akbar assumed the role of a king of all the people, irrespective of their colour and creed.

TOLERANCE

Akbar is the most misunderstood monarch as far as Pakistan is concerned. The textbooks and the writings of the religious circles paint him in dark colours: a ruler who had rendered great harm to Islam in India, and a man who was illiterate and, thus, unable to understand the true spirit of religion. These are all attempts to belittle Akbar as a person and as a ruler. The recent researches on him are ignored and the old prejudices prevail.

The first misunderstanding is that Akbar introduced a new religion. This is incorrect. The name *Din-i-Illahi* was for the first time used by Mohsin Fani, a 17th century scholar in his book *Dabistan-i-Mazahib* which was later on popularized by latter historians and writers. Abul Fazl and other contemporary historians did not use this term. Instead, Abul Fazl calls it in *Ain-i-Akbari* as *Ain-i-Rahnamuni*: rules and regulations for guidance.

The modern historians on the basis of the contemporary sources have proved that Akbar did not promulgate any new religion nor did he proclaim himself a prophet nor was there any scripture for the so-called new religion. It was just a cult of which Akbar was the *guru* and his followers were his *chelas*. It was just like any *Sufi Silsila* (order).

The important aspect of the cult was that the *chelas* were not asked to abandon their ancestral religion. On the other hand they were asked not to imitate any faith but accept it on the basis of rationality.

There were a number of his disciples who continued to follow their faith and were not asked to abjure it in order to become his *chelas*. He never coerced anybody to become a member of his cult nor was any attempt made to propagate it.

The author of *Dabistan-i-Mazahib*, writing on the new cult, points out that the followers had to take the oath never to be hostile to other religions, never to convert people by force to their faith, and never to harm any living creature. Therefore, it was a cult which formulated regulations to control the behaviour of people in order to make them civilized and cultured.

Vanina, writing in *Ideals and Society in India* (1996) rightly observed, "it was a social gathering simultaneously typical and new for mediaeval India's mystical order, a literary club and a social circle of enlightened philosophers all rolled into one; it was a part of a wider socio-cultural process and as such it continued to develop into different schools of thought."

Akbar never intended to make it a state religion. Toynbee is wrong in saying that Akbar made an attempt to introduce a new religion to strengthen the universal Mughal state. On the contrary, he announced his new cult when he had already crushed all rebellions and silenced all types of opposition. He was fully secured and there was no danger either to his throne or to his person.

Akbar's policy of *sulh-i-kul* or peace with all its different from his *Ain-i-Rahnamuni* (which he promulgated in 1582). His policy to treat people of all religions on the basis of equality was adopted in the early years of his reign when he married a Rajput princess and abolished religious taxes on the Hindus.

He continued this policy throughout his reign and never relented in spite of opposition from the Ulema and their *fatwas*. Therefore, his *Ain-i-Rahnamuni* and *Sulh-i-kul* were two different phenomena. One was the product of his intellectual skepticism and the other of his political and social need to integrate Indian society on the basis of equality.

The contention that "rarely are the citizens of a country discriminated on the basis of religion and creed" is not true. The world has witnessed the massacre of the Muslims in Bosnia and Kosovo. Daily we read in the newspapers how the Zionist of Israel discriminates against Muslims and Christians.

And how can we ignore the treatment of our religious minorities in Pakistan? All our three Constitutions contain discriminatory provisions against them. Every literate person knows how the Ahmadis were declared non-Muslims and how the state and society is treating them. Who can ignore the implications of the blasphemy law and its effects on the non-Muslims? How can we ignore the principle of separate elections for the minorities? There is no need to remind that no non-Muslim can become head of state of Pakistan, nor can a Hindu or a Christian aspire for the post of C-in-C. Once any group is deprived of its rights constitutionally, it cannot have any other way to redress its grievances except through violence or migration. We have to admit that we treat our religious minorities as second rate citizens.

As for the question why religious parties have so far failed to win an election, the answer is simple: All major political parties, whether Muslim League or PPP, implement their agenda, sometimes more vigorously than the religious parties.

What Akbar did in the mediaeval India provides us lessons to learn; to create a new political and social structure which makes all citizens of Pakistan equal and respectable not only constitutionally, but also in practice.

BEGGING IN HISTORY

Everyday, we come across countless beggars who harass us and use all sorts of methods to get alms. However, the phenomenon of begging is not new. We find it throughout history and in all those societies where the distribution of wealth was uneven and the gap between the rich and the poor and needy demanded their share from the surplus in possession of the rich. So, in actuality, it was not begging but sharing. The demand emerged when there was famine, drought, unemployment and such social and political crises that deprived people from earning their livelihood. Finding no other alternative, they resorted to begging or asking for their share from those who had more.

Generally, historians do not regard the subject interesting enough to record the activities of beggars in different periods, and how it reflected the attitude of society towards the problem of poverty. However, finding some information, an attempt is made to construct the changing attitude of beggary in history. During the mediaeval period in the West as well as the East, beggars were regarded as holy men and respected by society. To feed or to provide financial subsistence to them was an act of piety that was highly appreciated. The concept was that the alms-giver would get rewards in the Hereafter in his munificence. Beggars, knowing the religious sensibilities of the people, invoked religion to get alms and charity. Their practice was to go door to door and beg. Housewives, who provided them with food, requested them to pray for the well-being of their families. On festivals and ceremonies, people were generous in giving them alms in the spirit of sharing.

In India, giving alms to beggars is a centuries-old tradition. Nobles and rich traders, to earn a good name and reputation, helped the poor and arranged *langar* (free food) on various occasions. Kings and emperors also made it a point to give alms. About the Mughal emperor Akbar, Abul Fazl writes in *A'in-i-Akbari*: "There is a treasure always waiting at the court; and every beggar, when His Majesty sees him, is sure to find relief."

As beggars had no property and belongings, and no worldly ambitions, they acquired respect as men who were close to God; and it was believed that their prayers as well as curses were granted. Beggars were respectfully called *fakir* (who possessed one day's sufficiency for self and family), *baba* (father or respectable old man) and *saeen* (mister or sir). As they were free from all worldly problems and enjoyed life, many envied them. On this aspect, Richard Brome, an English poet, writes:

> "The only freemen of a common-wealth;
>
> Free about scot-free; that observe no law, Obey no governor; use no religion,
>
> But what they draw from their old custom Or constitutes themselves. Yet are no rebel."

Besides this, beggars adopted different methods to appeal to the sentiments of the people. Some of them played music and sang songs; and some attracted people by disfiguring their bodies. There is an interesting poem written by Robert Crowley, in 1550, that can be applied even today in our surroundings.

> I heard two beggars that under an hedge sate, Who did with long talk their matters debate.
>
> They had both sore legs most loathsome to see, All raw from the foot well most to the knee, 'My leg', quoth the one, 'I thank God is fair'.
>
> 'So is mine', quoth the other, 'in a cold air', For then it looked raw and as red as any blood, I would not have it healed for any world' good.

> No man would pity me but my sore leg, Wherefore
> if I were whole I might in vain beg.

Besides ordinary beggars there were some religious sects who adopted begging as their livelihood, such as Franciscans and Dominicans in Christianity. In order to be independent from state and church, they relied on society for sustenance and resorted to begging. In the Budhist traditions, the Bhikshus go door to door and beg. Even the king of Thailand, once a year, dons a Bhikshu dress and begs. There are two reasons for this: one, to shun off any sense of arrogance and inculcate humility. Secondly, having no property and lust for life, they devote their time in praying and meditation, that earns the respect of society. Hence, they become spiritual guides to the people. It also gives them freedom from state institutions that cannot exploit them for their political interests.

In Europe, the attitude of society towards begging changed in the 17th century as a result of growing influence of secularism and weakening of religion that shattered beliefs on salvation and life after death. This changed the whole image of beggars. If somebody was found begging, his head was shaved and sometimes he was also beaten up as punishment. Some of the European cities expelled them from their boundaries. Some passed acts against begging; and some issued licenses to the deserving for begging. In the Industrial age, when work became compulsory for every able-bodied person, beggars became a burden on society. They were either imprisoned or confined to workhouses. The whole concept of charity had undergone a change and to give alms to a beggar meant to corrupt him. The concept was that instead of helping the poor, it was better to provide him with a job. Charity became secular and no longer remained religious.

In our society, religion continues to dominate begging. A beggar invokes religion to get alms and uses all such phrases that appeal to the religious sentiments of the people. Thus, the exploitation of religion continues in the region__ beggars for charity and the rulers for power.

CHARITY AND SOCIETY

Charity is regarded as one of the best solutions to minimize the effects of poverty and to give relief to needy people. Individuals as well as institutions undertake the task to distribute it among those who need it badly. It is considered a religious obligation and a social responsibility to lessen the burden of impoverishment.

During the Sultanat period, Firuz Tughluq (1351-1388) institutionalised the charity and established a separate department that provided dowry to poor girls and financial assistance to destitute people. It was an old tradition to establish almshouses (*Langar Khanay*), where poor people could get free food. Mughal emperors founded such houses throughout the empire at the state expense.

Such houses increased in the time of famine or drought. Akbar (1556-1605) built such houses at Fatahpur for poor Muslims and Hindus. They were known as *Khairpura* and *Dharampura*. A large number of *Jogis* began to come to the capital when they smelled free food. Then a separate house was built for them known as Jogipura.

Jahangir (1605-1627) during his reign built such houses at Ahmadabad, Allahabad, Lahore, Delhi and Agra. These houses were known as *Bulgharkahan* (a place for the distribution of cooked food among the poor).

Besides these institutions of charity, there were some social and religious practices to give alms to the poor. For example, at the time of festivals or celebrations a tray full of silver and

gold coins was moved around the head of a nobleman or emperor, and then the money was distributed among the poor. The ceremony was called *Nisar*. It was thought to avert all evils on all occasions. It was also a practice that when an emperor or nobleman went out in procession for the *Eid* prayers or to visit tombs of saints and his ancestors, he threw money on the crowd of people who assembled to see the procession. This tradition of throwing money in India was regarded as an act of generosity.

Once Akbar thought a new way to distribute money among the poor. He filled a tank called *Anaptalao* at Fatahpur with coins that were distributed among poor.

Abul Fazl writes: "There was a reservoir in the courtyard of the palace at Fatahpur, twenty-yards long by twenty broad and three yards deep. This he caused to be filled with red, white, and black money (i.e., gold, silver and copper coins)." But on the first day, there was such a crowd that a number of people were stamped on. On seeing it Akbar decided to abandon this practice.

On the other hand the way to handle the problem of poverty was different in England. During the Tudor period (1485-1603), there emerged a new kind of beggars called the 'sturdy beggars' as a result of unemployment, dismissal of soldiers from the French wars and the War of the Roses, deforestation, and system of enclosures that deprived poor peasants to cultivate wasteland. They became a menace to the English society as they wandered in the countryside in groups and knocked doors for alms.

To solve this problem, the government passed a number of poor bills to provide relief to the needy people. The cost of relief was to be met by voluntary subscribers and Parish was to administer it. Next, the government decided to set up workhouses to discourage the poor to beg and to rely on relief. In 1723, a Workhouse Test Act was passed which required poor to enrol themselves in workhouses and work

there. In another act of 1834, the outdoor relief was withdrawn and they were forced to live in the workhouses.

Life in those workhouses was harsh and environment was unpleasant. There was no respect for family as husbands, wives and children were separated from each other and strict disciplines were observed. Meals had to be easten in silence. Diet was sparse. The inmates there were also provided jobs such as of stone-breaking, bone-grinding and of picking old ropes to pieces. Charles Dickens in his novels graphically depicts the condition of those workhouses.

A historian writes: "There was a famous scandal in Andover workhouse when the inmates, working on bones-crushing were so hungry that they were found to be eating rotten marrow and fats from the bones. No wonder, the workhouses became known among the workers as Bastilles (after the notorious fortress-prison in Paris)."

Condition of the workhouses improved as a result of public pressure during 1850s. However, their image persisted among the poor who regarded those houses unpleasant to live. By the passage of time, the Poor Laws were replaced with a series of new institutions, which provided relief to poor people either through state institutions or charity foundations.

There is a basic difference between the individual and institutional charities. In case of an individual, it lasts only during his lifetime while an institution functions for generations, if it is maintained properly.

Moreover, when an individual helps the poor, the receiver personally feels obliged to his benefactor while the alms-giver assumes arrogance and makes an attempt to use it for his social and political motives or for his personal glory. But in case of the institution there is no such thing. Contributors to such institutions mostly remain anonymous. So the institutional help keeps dignity of a receiver.

In the democratic system, it is a right of citizens to demand from state and its institutions to take care of them. Therefore, the government should take such measures that no one would ask for help from his fellow citizens for his maintenance.

THE CONCEPT OF 'HELL'

With the development of human society, there emerged concepts of sin and virtue, evil and good. It was observed that some evildoers were punished for their deeds but some of them were not, specially those who wielded power and enjoyed privileges. As there was no strong authority to punish them, they remained free to commit all sorts of crimes.

This helplessness resulted in the belief that if such people could not be punished in this world, they would be condemned in the next. It satisfied weaker sections of society, that these tyrants and criminals would be damned by the Divine power forever.

How the concept of Hell is formulated and on what stages does it pass through is traced by Alan E. Bernstein in his book *The Formation of Hell: Death and Retribution in the Ancient and Early Christian Worlds.* According to him, in the Mesopotamian civilization, it was believed that after death there would be no account for sins and all the dead, good or bad, would be treated equally. Neither would they be punished or rewarded for their deeds. It was a general belief that there was a separate world for the dead. Therefore, in ancient mythology, we find that many attempts were made to discover the world of the dead.

In the *Epic of Gilgamesh* it is narrated: "A great expanse of land and sea divides the living from the land of the dead." In the Babylonian civilization, the dead lived beneath this world where they were ruled by a king. They built forts and walls

around them to defend themselves against the living, and did not allow anybody from the outside world to come in.

In the Egyptian civilization, the concept of punishment for evildoers and reward for virtuous people developed. After death, every individual had to pass through a process in which he was judged on the basis of his deeds. Those who were found guilty, their bodies were cut into pieces. They were told: "The fire is against you, the flames are against you, the blazing heat is against you and stabs at you, and hacks you in pieces, and cuts you up in such a way that ye shall never again see those who are living upon earth."

The Greeks and the Romans also believed that there was a separate world of the dead underneath the earth. The Greeks called it Hades, where spirits of the dead were put in different categories, according to their acts. Those found involved in crimes and sins were condemned forever.

The Jews elaborated the concept of punishment and reward after death, and formulated Gehenna or Hell for sinners. In the Old Testament, there is a full description of it and details of how evildoers would be punished. "The Lord will swallow them up in his wrath; and fire will consume them." There is warning to malcontents: "For behold, the day comes, burning like an oven, when all the arrogant and evildoers will be stubble; the day that comes shall burn them up."

In one of the Psalms it is said: "The Lord rests the righteous and wicked, And his soul hates him that loves violence. On the wicked he would rain coal fire and brimstone; A scorching wind shall be the portion of their cup. For the Lord is righteous, he loves righteous deeds; The upright shall behold his face."

In Christianity, the references of Hell are few and they are not elaborated, but later on, some of the Christian Fathers developed the idea of Hell with gruesome detail. Fater Pietro Pinamonti warned: "Every damned person will be like a heated oven, blazing hot on the outside and inside his chest; the filthy blood will boil in his veins, as will the brain in his

skull, heart in his chest, and the guts in his wretched body."

In Islam, the same model of Hell is adopted and *Gehenna* of the Hebrews became *Jahannum* of Arabic. It is believed that there would be a Day of Judgment, when all the dead would rise from their graves and, after accounting their good and evil deeds, would be either punished or rewarded.

In every period of history there were thinkers and intellectuals who challenged the concept of Hell. For example, in the Roman period, Plutark, a historian, raised the question that why sinners and the wicked are not punished in this world; and why the delay in punishment? He argued that they should be punished in this world so that everybody can see it.

John Goudsblom in *Fire and Civilization* writes: "The image of hell-fire, as developed by successive generations of theologians, poets and painters,... were puzzled by the question of what constituted the social and psychological soil on which these images could thrive. In order to understand the civilizing campaigns, they need also to be seen in the wider context of a military-agrarian society with a steadily growing urban population. The people who feared fire in Hell also had some knowledge in war and fire in cities."

HISTORY OF 'PARADISE'

In the Pahlavi language, paradise means a garden which is surrounded by four walls and full of fruit trees, flowers, foundations, birds and where men and women live together happily.

In Arabic, *jannat* also means a garden set with trees or a grove with palm trees. Among the Greeks, the Jews, and the Christians there are three concepts of paradise. In one of them, it is said that perhaps once upon a time there was a golden age on this earth when there was no conflict, no rivalry and no hatred against each other and all men and women lived peacefully and happily. It further explains that there was plenty to eat and beautiful natural surroundings to enjoy. The memories of the golden age have become a part of collective memory of humankind that is why he is yearning for such time where he could live peacefully and leisurely.

In the second concept it was believed that there were such islands where man could live a carefree life. Third concept was of Elysian Field where there were no worldly problems and peace reigned eternally.

About the golden age, Hesiod, a Roman poet writes that in the golden age, men "lived like gods without sorrow of heart, remote and free from toil and grief: miserable age rested not on earth, but with legs and arms never failing; they made merry with feasting beyond the reach of all evils."

Plato in *The Stateman* portrays golden age in the reign of

Choronos where "they had fruits in plenty from the trees and other plants, and they lived for the most part in the open air, without clothing or bedding."

Later on, Christian religious scholars emphasized on the existence of earthly paradise that was in some far off and unknown place and inaccessible to people, only some individuals, after special permission, could visit it. In another point of view, God had lifted it to heavens and one could go there only after his death.

In the mediaeval period, Christian scholars believed that earthly paradise was the Garden of Eden which was existed somewhere in the world. In 1165, it was a popular belief that this paradise was situated in Asia in the kingdom of Prestor John. Or it was in some unknown island which subsequently created curiosity and the adventurers started voyages in search of it.

When America was discovered, some of them found it in Brazil and some in Cape Hermoso. Amerigo Vespucci wrote in one his letters that: "the friendly land, covered with countless very tall trees that do not loose their leaves and that emit sweet and fragrant odours and are loaded with tasty fruits that promote the body's health; the field of thick grass that are filled with flowers which have a wonderful delightful perfume; the great throng of birds of various species, whose feathers, colours and songs defy description. For myself, I thought I was near the earthly paradise."

The geographical maps that were prepared during the mediaeval period, pointed out the probable location of the earthly paradise. Some of them indicated it in Ethiopia, or Armenia, Iraq, Palestine, and South America.

Christian scholars also discussed that when and at what time God created paradise and at what stage expelled Adam and Eve from it. They also discussed how tall were Adam and Eve and what was their age at the time of their creation. Were

there no diseases in paradise? Did they work and spent their time leisurely?

Martin Luther's argument was that if Adam and Eve had not committed sin, mankind would have not endured worldly torture and misery. In this case neither they needed any paper, nor books. On the contrary they would have everlasting wisdom.

Then there was question: what was the language of paradise? Some argued that as Hebrew is the oldest language, therefore, God had conversed with Adam in it. However, this did not satisfy the nationalists of different countries and they proved that languages of paradise were Swedish, Danish, and Flemish.

Another question was: were man and woman equal in paradise? The reply was that if Eve would not have tempted Adam to commit sin, both of them could enjoy equal status. The role of Eve downgraded women. However, it was further argued: nature demanded that Eve should have obeyed Adam.

As in feudal Europe private property had become sacred, the question was asked about it: Was there private property in paradise? On this question Saint Ambros said that there was no question of private property in paradise. However, in the 17th century amendments were made and it was said that if anybody would have collected fruits from trees, in this case he would have right to possess them and any attempt to snatch from him would have been a sin.

These views indicate that how the institution of private property was becoming strong in society and religion supported it.

In the 17th century when European scholars criticized the Bible and its concept of creation, the belief on earthly paradise subsequently weakened. Instead of searching the lost paradise, people decided to create their own paradise on

earth. Therefore, such gardens were set up which could revile paradise. In Europe, botanical gardens were founded in 1533 in Venice, in 1545 in Padaua, in 1546 in Pisa and in 1575 in Paris.

In the Indian subcontinent, Mughals set up a number of gardens on the model of paradise with trees, fountains, flowerbeds, and waterways and proudly claimed that if there is a paradise on earth, here it is, here it is.

SILK AND CULTURE

Things of daily use play an important role in influencing and changing the habits and behaviour of people. Those who are rich and resourceful, use luxury things to distinguish themselves from the commoners. Such things become symbols of their high status and social class. To make these inaccessible to the commoners, different methods are adopted by the elite classes: either to make these things so expensive that the ordinary people cannot afford them or to make their use unlawful for the lower classes.

In these times, such a law would be termed a violation of human rights, therefore other methods are used. One such is to manufacture them in less quantity and sell them at high cost so that only the wealthy are able to buy them. This trend is evident in the changing fashions of dress, ornaments, jewellery, furniture, and architecture. These luxuries are linked to sophistication and refinement. Only the super rich can afford their possession.

The study of an objects' history reveals its role and impact on the social, cultural, and religious life of a society. Xinru Liu, a Chinese professor of history, wrote an interesting book on 'Silk and religion' surveying historical use of silk and its impact on Asian and Western societies from 600 A.D. to 1200 A.D.

He rejected the myth that China was the first country to produce silk and that it kept its preparation secret till some Nestorian priest smuggled silk worms and introduced the manufacturing of silk to other countries. He argued that silk

was produced in China, India, Byzantinian and the Roman world simultaneously.

However, the quality of Chinese silk was superior to the others. As it was very expensive, only the aristocracy used it. Besides dresses, silk was also used for other purposes such as a currency. Artisans, who prepared it, paid duties to the government in the form of silk. It was also used as a shroud at a noble's death.

In 7th century China, there were rules and regulations for the use of silk. In 681, the king Kao-tsung issued an edict revealing how the nobility and ruler were particular about the usage of silk.

> "It is said that some officials and commoners do not follow the rules (of clothing) in public, but wear tight jackets of crimson, purple, black, and green under their robes. They even dare to show these clothes when they are in lanes or in the country. This kind of behaviour blurs the distinction between the nobles and masses, and erodes moral standards. From now on, everyone should wear clothes designated for the lower ones, but those of lower rank are not allowed to wear the clothes of those above their status. The official in charge should enforce this rule and never allow such aggressions to occur."

Silk as a costly cloth was gradually used in different religion to preserve holy relics. First, the Buddhist kept the relic of the Buddha wrapped in silk and used silken banners on their monasteries. Later, in the Christian churches the use of silk became silken and silken curtains were hung on the walls of churches to beautify them. The figure of Christ and saints were at times embroidered on them. The holy relics were also preserved in silken folders. The graves of saints were also covered by beautiful silken cloth.

In Islamic societies on the other hand, there was no such prohibition on the use of silk for commoners as it was in China and in the Roman world. However, there are Traditions of the Holy Prophet (PBUH) in which the wearing

of silken clothes for men is prohibited. As a wealthy class emerged in the Muslim world, it started to wear silken clothes to distinguish itself. These were used as status symbols. Muslim rulers established factories for the preparation of silken dresses.

The Abbasid Caliphs, to compete with the Byzantinian emperors, used silk as a means to show off their wealth and grandeur. It is said that the Abbasid Caliph Muqdadirbillah (908-932) had 28 thousand silk curtains at his court which were hung at festivals and other occasions of celebration to create awe among onlookers.

Other Muslim rulers also established royal factories for the preparation of silken robes of honour for gifts to nobles and for the dresses of the royal family, following the tradition. The Fatimids of Egypt possessed rich silk curtains for the adornment of their palaces. Later on, it became popular practice to give robes of honour to notables and nobles on different occasions in appreciation of their services to the empire.

History shows that in the medieval times, the use of silk was not only for religious purposes but silk dresses were a symbol of a high class. When devotees came from China to India they brought with them silk that was offered to Buddhist shrines and monasteries as gifts and in case of need was used as currency to meet their expenses.

THE ROLE OF EMOTIONS

So far it was the domain of psychologists to study and investigate the impact of emotions of human life. Now, historians extending the borders of history, are making attempts to analyze the role of emotions in the formation of history and its progress. However, emotions are studied in their historical perspective to see how they change their meaning and perception in different historical periods.

Anger is one such emotion. Individuals express their anger to show despair, helplessness, and some time authority over others. Whenever individuals become angry, it is indicated not only from the movement of their body and the expression of their face but the language that they speak.

Anger is also used as a tool to control the weaker classes of society. On the one hand it is advised that the elite classes should show their anger to their servants in order to instil awe and fear in them. On the other hand, the lower classes are expected to control their anger in spite of the injustice and exploitation by their superiors.

Historians of the Annals school are exploring new territories in historical studies. One such historian will write the history of emotions. Barbara Rosen Wein has published a book *The Anger's past: the Social uses of emotion in the Middle Ages* It is a collection of articles written by eminent historians on the various aspects of anger in the past. These articles deal with as to how anger is related to the various classes and how these classes showed their anger in their particular circumstances. For example, the anger of the priestly class

was associated with religion, while rulers, nobles, and feudal lords possessing power and authority behaved autocratically using anger as a tool to control their subjects. Peasants and poor people suppressed their anger against the authorities, kept silence and endured all hardships.

Anger had many features in the medieval period. One of them was to abuse and curse in a state of anger. The nature of the curse indicated the social and religious status of the individual. In the case of a religious man he sought the help of God to destroy or eliminate the adversary or enemy: for example, his curses contained these sentences: "May the Lord toss their bodies as bait to the birds of sky and the beasts of the land. May they be damned with the devil and angles in hell and may they burn in eternal fire." Whenever God's help was sought to destroy or to harm a person, it indicated two things: one that the person cursing was very weak and had no power to take revenge against his enemy, therefore, he needed divine help to fulfil his wish. Secondly, he did not want to take the responsibility of someone's calamity and wished to make God responsible for the catastrophe on his enemy.

Contrary to religious curses, secular ones were different. In this case, the opponents were abused in such terms that were regarded socially challenging. For example, to call anybody a bastard was to challenge his ancestry and to humiliate his social status. In other cases, those who had the authority accused their subordinates of being lazy, stupid, illiterate, and uncultured rogues. Rulers in normal circumstances remained composed but showed their anger towards rebels, criminals, and recalcitrant nobles. It was tradition that whenever a royal edict was issued it would mention that in case of disobedience, royal wrath would not spare anyone. Both in the East as well as in the West manuals known as the *mirrors of princes* were written for the rulers instructing them on how to behave in different circumstances. It is advised that rulers should maintain a balance in their kindness and anger. In case of imbalance there would be chaos and anarchy.

For example, in Indian history Jalaluddin Khilji is criticized by contemporary historians for being too kind to rebels and criminals resulting on weakness of his rule. On the other hand, Balban and Alauddin were too strict and rendered severe punishment to rebels and criminals. The result was that after their death, their successors allowed unlimited freedom that ultimately led to the collapse of their dynasties. Both extremes proved disastrous for rulers.

In the medieval period peasants were regarded as uncultured and savages, therefore, their anger was judged in the light of their social status. It was not a positive or just anger but an anger that created riot, disorder, and lawlessness. Contemporary historians condemned their revolts as a result of irrational anger. In 1233 Pope Gregory ix proclaimed a crusade against the rebellion of peasants in Bremen calling them wild beasts. The rebellions of peasants were judged by ruling classes not as a result of exploitation but from disobedience of authority.

Paul Freedman, writing on *Peasants' Anger in the Middle Ages* observes that: "Peasants' anger was not portrayed as a response to injustice, much less as a purposeful social movement. Rage was potentially inherent in the essentially low nature of the peasantry that could erupt if the rustics were not held firmly in check. Cold, calculated anger, either for revenge or in defense of honour, was considered generally impossible for peasants." In a hierarchical society, the rebellion of peasants was looked upon because the right to fight a battle was the privilege to knights while the duty of peasants was to labour and work. Their anger and subsequent rebellions were stated as violation of tradition and, therefore, should be crushed without mercy.

Marc Bloch, a French historian traces the causes of the emotional states of the medieval people and argues that the reason of their anger was that they did not get nutritious food. Secondly, they did not have any sense of cleanliness. These two elements made them emotional in their daily life. Besides these, there was fear of authority, epidemics, famines,

incidents of violence and torture that contributed to a sense of insecurity in them.

The change in Europe occurred as a result of the Renaissance which initiated, in the words of Norbert Elias, "a process of civilization". In the changed environment, it became a virtue to control anger and behave like a gentleman. In the modern age, the nature of anger has further changed as a result of the democratization of society. **Now, not people but rulers are afraid of people's anger.**

THE CULTURE OF FLOWERS

The culture of flowers seems to have recently become widespread and popular, evident from the mushrooming flower shops and kiosks around. It has now become practice to present a bouquet or put garlands around a friend's neck as a gesture of love and respect.

However, flowers have been used since time immemorial as a symbol of love in nearly all ancient civilizations, except for the three great Semitic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam. Poets, artists and intellectuals are so enthralled by their delicacy, colours, and beauty that they use them as vehicles to express their inner emotions and sentiments.

When we trace the history of the culture of flowers we find its existence in the civilisation of ancient Egyptians which regarded the lotus flowers as sacred and on occasions of religious festivals displayed it and other flowers as a mark of respect and devotion. It was their belief that their god 'Ra' was born out of the lotus flower. However, in Greece and Rome, the use of flowers was secular rather than religious. Their favourite flower was the rose which they displayed on every occasion. Such was its widespread use that most phrases of daily use referred to it. (Such as "a bed of roses"). As the demand for roses increased, merchants and traders planted a number of gardens to meet consumer's demands. Soon, flower shops emerged in every nook and corner of the cities and vendors started to sell them in the markets and streets. Another important change that took place during this period was that instead of human sacrifice, now flowers were

offered to deities, a reflection of how man's bloody nature had changed.

With the decline of the Roman Empire, the culture of flowers also declined. When Christianity replaced the Roman power, it adopted a hostile attitude towards flower culture. The Christian Fathers opposed this practice on the grounds that their apostles never used crowns of flowers, neither did they decorate alters with them nor displayed them on any religious festivals. In early Christianity, the religious authorities not only forbade the use of flowers but also condemned the use of perfume as well because it was the practice of infidels.

However, gradually, the prejudice against flowers and perfumes diminished and in the 9th century, flowers were used for decoration in churches and monasteries. Different flowers became symbols for different ideas and concepts such as an olive for peace and a rose as a symbol of the blood of a martyr evolved. During the Renaissance, the culture of flowers flourished extensively. It became the favourite topic of writers and painters. Such was the enthusiasm that competitive flower exhibitions were organized and nurseries established to produce the best flowers. As the production of flowers increased, it no longer remained confined to the nobility but became accessible to the common people. Now, one could see flowering plants in front of shops and in the balconies of house of the common people.

In 1554, the Austrian ambassador saw the tulip flower at the court of the Ottomans. He was so impressed by its beauty that he took it to Vienna. In 1560, is was planted in Holland, Belgium, and Germany. In 1778, it was so widely cultivated in Holland that it became its national symbol.

The culture of flowers suffered in England when the Parliament under Cromwell came to power. The Puritans prohibited the use of flowers and perfume in churches. In 1660 an act was passed by the Parliament that warned women not to use flowers and perfumes. The culture

reflourished after the restoration of monarchy and as a result of the separation of politics and religion. Secular ideas encouraged the use of flowers while religious extremists made attempts to suppress their use. Later on, industrialization further promoted the culture and made it an important part of modern society's daily life.

Jack Goody writes in his book *The Culture of Flowers* how in the Indian civilization: "An attractive women's apparel was hardly complete without 'buds, flowers, wreaths, blossoms and tendrils'. Picking flowers was one of Sita's pleasures; her fondness of lotuses, which she places in her hair. Men too wore flowers, especially as garlands which were a favourite bed-time adornment. They were used not only to decorate individuals but also chariots, roads, houses, palaces and even cities. The gift of garlands was connected with courtship and marriage." The Lotus flower, like it was in Egypt, is regarded sacred in Hindu society. It is the favourite flower of Vishnu, Krishna, and Lakshami. (Now it is a party symbol of the BJP).

The Muslims of India were influenced by the Hindu culture of flowers. The Mughals were very fond of flowers and as Jahangir mentions in his *Tzuk*, Nurjahan's mother invented rose perfume (*Atr-e-gulab*). In the 19th century, the composite culture introduced a flower festival at the Mughal court (*Pholon walon ki ser*) which was celebrated every year under the patronage of the Mughal king (Mirza Farhatullah Beg wrote an excellent essay on it).

However, at the same time, religious extremists, like the early Christian Fathers, condemned the use of flowers for religious as well as for secular purposes. Saiyyed Ismail Shaheed in his *Taqwaiyatul Iman* and *Sirat-e-Mustaqeem* forbade the use of garlands (*Sehra*) by the bridegroom in the wedding ceremony.

Interestingly, flowers were widely used in shrines where devotees offered flowers to the graves of Sufi saints. The culture of flowers suffered whenever religious extremists came to power, but flourished in secular environments. This observation is correct even today.

FROM PAPPA TO POTATO

Technological inventions bring changes in societies and accelerate their economic and social development. Similarly, new varieties of food contribute to changing human behaviour and social attitudes. The process of history shows that humans gradually discovered different kinds of vegetables, herbs, fruits and grains and after experiments used them for their food.

To make it tastier, spices were added in the process of cooking. As civilization progressed, the preparation and presentation of food became an art which created a social gulf between the rich and the poor. With the growth of the population, there was a need to discover more items for eating.

In the 15th century, a miracle happened: the old world came to know about the new world, which introduced a number of new food items including potatoes. Their introduction and adoption greatly influenced the social, political and economic life of Europe whose growing population was desperately in need of more food.

Potatoes were originally cultivated in Peru and Bolivia, areas where the Inca civilization was at its peak at the time of the European's invasion. It was such an important crop that before its cultivation, human sacrifice was made to make it fertile. Later on the llama, a South American animal, replaced human sacrifice. The sacrifice reflects how far the people of this area depended on potatoes for their livelihood.

Columbus first brought potatoes, in 1493, from Haiti to Spain where experiments were made to cultivate it. It appears from historical evidence that the eating of potato was popular as sacks of potatoes were used for food during long voyages, loaded on to American bound ships.

In the South American countries, potatoes were known by a different name: in Peru, they were known as 'pappa' and in Chili as 'pogni'. From pappa it became batata and finally potato in English. In Goa, it acquired the name of 'batata surata' because it came to Goa from the port of Surat. It was also called 'earth apple'. The Iranians translated it into Persian as *Saib-i-zamini*. They also referred to it as *Alu-i-Molcolm* on the name of an officer of the East India Company who first introduced it to Iran. The Italians named it as 'tortoufle' and the Germans called it as 'kartoffel'.

Although the Spaniards brought potatoes in the 15th century to Europe, there were doubts about its use. People were reluctant to eat them instead of bread. Some refused because they were not mentioned in the Bible. Many thought them to cause leprosy. To counter doubts, the government of France in 1771 asked the Department of medicine of the University of Paris to give its opinion on whether they were useful or detrimental to health. The response of the university was positive. In the Prussian State, people were also not ready to eat the potato. In 1774, when Fredrick sent potatoes to Kolberg where a famine-like situation prevailed, people resisted their use. "The things have neither smell nor taste. Not even the dogs will eat them, so what use are they to us" said the people of Kolberg. Fredrick became so angry that he sent an army and forced the peasants to cultivate them.

In their early history, the eating of potatoes related to social status. The Spaniards, as conquerors, were reluctant to eat potatoes, as they were the food of the local people. Similarly, the English were also hesitant to use them, as it was the staple food of the Irish regarded as an inferior race. Social status was also determined on what kind of potatoes people ate. In

the 18th and early 19th century, poor people could only afford to eat lumbers, a cheap variety, while aristocrats ate gregorscup, a better quality of potatoes.

The ruling classes of Europe soon became interested in popularizing the use of the potato, as it was a cheap food and could prevent starvation. In Ireland, the potato greatly influenced social, cultural, political, and economic history. As the climate was suitable for its cultivation it became an important crop. However, Ireland suffered immensely from England's political hegemony. The English landlords took all its grain away. No encouragement was made to promote its industry; subsequently, economic backwardness, constant rebellions against England, assassination of their leaders, civil wars, immigration, deforestation, famines, and droughts were the causes that created shortages of food. Potatoes filled this vacuum. According to one historian: "Irish farmers in the seventeen century were the first to realize that a quarter acre of land would yield twenty hundred weights of potatoes."

However, dependence on potatoes had negative effects in the 1840's when there were severe famines, which resulted in the catastrophic devastation of Ireland. Thousands of people died of starvation and those who could afford it, immigrated to America. The estimate is that three and half million people left for America between 1851 and 1946. The social impact was that the Irish male was forced to marry late and some of them preferred to remain unmarried. The government failed to alleviate the suffering resulting in political unrest that led to a number of movements against England.

In Ireland, potatoes kept the level of poverty low for nearly 30 years. The English factory owners took advantage of them because they provided them with cheap labour. In this respect potatoes as a cheap food helped the powerful classes to exploit the poor and needy and use them for their interest. Thus, on the one hand, it was used as cheap food, and on the other, it strengthened the class system in Europe. Van Gogh, who visited along with Zola, the settlements of miners,

painted the masterpiece 'Potato eaters' showing the grim misery of the potato eaters. Zola wrote his famous novel *Germinal* on their living conditions.

The potato is still playing its historical role by providing people throughout the world with cheap and tasty food in the form of French fries and cutlets.

TOBACCO AND THE MUGHAL COURT

Medically, it is now established that smoking is hazardous for health and, therefore, to discourage habitual and addicted smokers, there are laws and social restrictions which are in force to keep public places clean from smoking.

But there was a time when its introduction thrilled the people of Europe and they readily became addicted to the new drug that was brought first by the Spaniards, and then the Portuguese from the New World. When some of the fellows of Columbus saw the inhabitants of Cuba smoking tobacco, their observation was recorded as such: "They light it at one end and at the other, they suck, chew, or draw in with their breath that smoke with which their flesh is benumbed and so to speak, it intoxicates them, and in this way, they say they do not know fatigue."

Soon, it became popular throughout Europe. The Portuguese brought it to southern India and from there it reached the court of Akbar in 1604-5 by a Mughal noble whose name was Asad Beg. He was sent by Akbar as an ambassador to Bijapur. There, he saw tobacco and knowing that Akbar was fond of rare and new things, he decided to bring it as a present to him. According to him, when Akbar noticed something in the tray "he expressed great surprise and examined the tobacco, which was made up in pipeful; he inquired what it was, and where I had got it. Nawab Khan-i-Azam replied: "This is tobacco, which is well known in Makkah and Madina, and this doctor has brought it as a medicine for your majesty."

Akbar became curious and wanted to smoke it. Asad Beg

brought a handsome pipe for Akbar. It "was three cubits in length, beautifully dried and coloured, both ends being adorned with jewels and enamel." The court physician tried to forbid the emperor not to smoke a new drug which might be dangerous to his health, but Akbar insisted and to please Asad Beg, smoked a little. He then asked the druggist who was brought to the court about tobacco and its qualities. His reply was that there was nothing about it in his books. Then followed an interesting discussion which indicates the intellectual atmosphere at the court of Akbar. A physician said: "It is an untried medicine, about which the doctors have written nothing. How can we describe to Your Majesty the qualities of such unknown things? It is not fitting that Your Majesty should try it."

To that, Asad Beg replied to the physician: "The Europeans are not foolish as not to know all about it. There are wise men among them who seldom err or commit mistakes. How can you, before you have tried it a thing and found out all its qualities, pass a judgement on it that can be depended on by physicians, kings, great men and nobles? Things must be judged according to their good or bad qualities, and the decision must be according to the facts of the case."

The physician responded: "We do not follow the Europeans in adopting a custom which is not sanctioned by our own wise men without trial."

Asad Beg replied: "It is a strange thing, for every custom in the world has been new at one time or other; from the days of Adam till now, they have gradually been invented. When a new thing is introduced among a people, and becomes well known in the world, everyone adopts it. Wise men and physicians should determine the good or bad qualities of a thing; the good qualities may not appear at once.

Akbar enjoyed the discussion and commented that: "truly, we must not reject a thing that has been adopted by the wise men of other nations merely because we cannot find it in our books; or how shall we progress?"

Asad Beg brought large quantities of tobacco and a number of pipes that he generously gifted to nobles and his friends. Akbar himself never smoked it again. The author of *Ma'asir-i-Rahimi* also testifies that tobacco first came during Akbar's reign and soon became popular among the Mughal nobility. However, it is assumed that there was also strong opposition to smoking it. Jahangir, in 1617, mentions in *Tuzuk* that: "As the smoking of tobacco had taken a bad effect upon the health and mind of many persons, I ordered no one should practice the habit. My brother, Shah Abbas, also being aware of its evil effects, had issued a command against the use of tobacco."

It appears that in the 17th century, there was widespread opposition to tobacco smoking. That is why the ruler of England, James I, forbade its use. It was also banned by the Ottoman Sultan Murad (1623-1640). There was a death penalty for those who violated the ban.

Thomas Roe, the English ambassador who visited the Mughal court during 1615-1618, found it difficult to procure tobacco in India because of its ban and wrote to his friend, Popwell, in England, to send him four or five pounds for his personal use. When a German traveller, Mandeslo, visited India during Shah Jahan's period, he observed that smoking was common among the nobility as well as among the common people.

We find that the later Mughal rulers had a separate department for smoking known as *Bhandar Khana*. Kings and nobles made elaborate arrangements for smoking the *hukkah*. When the British came to India, in the early period they also adopted the habit. It no longer remained a habit of the nobility but common people adopted it with enthusiasm as well. The *hukkah* became a symbol of communal fraternity.

INSCRIPTIONS ON TOMBSTONES

To bury the dead is an ancient practice. Believing that the dead may one day rise again and come to life, relatives and community people buried personal belongings that could be used in the next life. These included pottery, food, jewels, ornaments, and weapon. Later on, when archaeologists excavated these ancient sites, the discovered antiquities became a great source of information, enabling historians to trace the history and culture of past societies. However, the practice to bury things ceased when the concept of private property and inheritance established in many societies, and the custom to distribute the dead person's property among heirs became prevalent.

The tradition of erecting tombstones was started to distinguish the dead. They were not merely signs, but people also inscribed on it the detail of the dead person's life, his achievements, qualities and a prayer to get a dignified place in paradise. Sometimes, there were verses of famous poets relating to the mortal world and lamentation of worldly pleasures. A reminder to the living that this was their last destination. When historians study these inscriptions belonging to different ages, they make attempts to construct the history of the social and cultural values and traditions of a particular period.

For example, if a society believed in the hereafter, the inscriptions showed their beliefs in punishment and reward in the next world. If a society did not believe in any religion, their inscriptions did not deal with gods and their anger or

punishment. Historically, fear of the afterlife emerged when the 'great religions' appeared and formulated the concept of heaven and hell, reward and punishment for good and bad deeds on the Day of Judgement. In pagan societies, there was no fear of death; it was regarded as a natural phenomenon that was accepted without any concern.

In this respect, the inscriptions on Roman tombstones and their readings are very interesting. Archaeologists and historians studied nearly 100,000 epitaphs of Roman tombs that show that they did not believe much in the hereafter, and even after death their interest in worldly affairs was not over. It was a Roman custom that nobles and resourceful persons used to build their tombs outside the city, on both sides of the roads, with the purpose that travellers and passersby should visit their graves and read the inscriptions on their tombstones. The writings are purely related to their private affairs. There are advice and instructions to relatives and friends, and curses to rivals and enemies. Good wishes to passersby. In one of the epitaphs, travellers are addressed: "Read, passing friend, what role I played in this world. And now that you have read, have a pleasant journey." A traveller, in response inscribed on the tomb: "You take care, too."

Some people left their message generally to the public, telling them to learn lessons from their life. In one of the inscription it is said: "I lived meanly so long as it was given me to live, and I advise you to enjoy yourself more than I did. That's life: You get this far and too farther. I never heeded the advice of my philosopher. Beware of the doctors: they are the ones who killed me."

Some, even after their death, never forget their opponents and castigated them from their graves. A noble whose freed man betrayed him, dubbed him as a highway robber. A father announced that he disinherited his disobedient daughter. A mother accused another woman, believing that she had poisoned her son. One of the epitaphs expresses the hope that his wicked friend would feel the wrath of the gods of heaven

and hell.

Death of a child or young person was mourned and sorrows were expressed on epitaph. In one of such case, it is inscribed: "He was kidnapped by Bacchus to become his intimate and companion." Commenting on this Roman custom, Paul Veyne writes in *A History of Private Life*: "We know for a fact that when a Roman felt like reading a little, he took a walk outside the city. Epitaphs were easier to read than the cursive script of books. None spoke of suffering of the bereaved; all mentioned the social role of the deceased and his faithful discharge of duties towards family and friends. To make dinner conversation about one host's tombstone was not a social gaffe, likely to bring morbid thought to his mind. He would have been reassured, rather, that his dignity and virtues could remain in the public eye after he was gone."

It shows that how the concept of death has changed from time to time. However, one thing is certain_ man's deep desire is to be remembered after his death. Some of them are remembered for a short period and some of them, who are lucky, remembered as saviours and heroes for a longer time. One cannot deny the role of epitaphs and inscriptions on tombstones that keep the memory of dead persons alive.

IMPERIALISM DEVOURS ITS OWN CHILDREN

Imperial powers, driven by misdirected nationalism and self imposed righteousness had frequently attacked, based, and occupied the weaker countries and subsequently plundered their resources. In the wake of the victory, the rulers and generals are glorified for their exploits and treated as 'heroes' for their feats.

In the excitement and euphoria that follow the conquest, people forget the price that they had to pay for it. Soldiers and civilians die on both sides. In the case of continued occupation, administrators and occupying forces isolated from their own cultural environment and milieu have to spend their prime time of life in a foreign country.

For example, it was the custom of the British in India to send their officers back home after 55 years so that the Indians could not see an old British officer. While youth was the symbol of power, old age betrayed weakness that an imperial power did not like to exhibit. Hence, one generation after another of the English people were made to pay this price for the glory of their nation.

The question arises that when the British, as an imperial power, took various countries of Asia and Africa into its colonial fold and exploited their resources, who actually benefited from it: common people or the ruling elites? The 19th century was the zenith of British imperialism, and it was during this period that great monuments were constructed to glorify the power and might of it, industries flourished by consuming raw materials of colonized countries and traders

and merchants profited beyond their expectations. But the common people of the country suffered and faced miseries and hardships of life and did not get any share in the spoils of the conquests.

G.M. Trevelyan writes in *English Social History* that in the 19th century "the term paupers as used in England and more particularly in agriculture districts embraces that numerous classes of society who depend for subsistence solely upon the labour of their hands." When field labourers did not find any job and agitated for their demands in 1830, they were declared rioters and tried on criminal charges. Three of them were hanged and 420 were transported as convicts to Australia where the imperial administration needed workers to cultivate plantations on cheap wages. Later, it became a general practice to declare people convicts even for minor crimes so as to send them to Australia for work. It is documented that the conditions of workers in the imperial and industrial age was miserable. They lived in slums where there existed no sanitation, no education, and no entertainment. They lived in perpetual fear of unemployment. Men, women, and children worked for 16 to 17 hours without any off day.

Frederick Engeles, commenting on the conditions of working class in England, writes: "The consequence of all these influences among the workers is a general weakening of the body. There are few strong, well-built and healthy people among them - at least among the industrial workers who generally work in closed rooms and with whom we are here concerned. They are almost all weakly, gaunt and pale. Their bone structure is angular but not powerful. Their muscles are flabby from fever... their weakened bodies are unable to withstand illness and therefore seized by it on every occasion. That is why they age early and die young."

On the one side, the looted wealth concentrated in a few hands with aristocracy becoming richer and richer. On the other side, the condition of the industrial towns was pathetic and gloomy. In November 1836, Charles Dickens first visited

Manchester and gave a moving account of the city: "Through miles of cinder-paths and blazing furnaces and roaring steam engines, and such a mass of dirt, gloom and misery as I never before witnessed."

Cook Tylor, another visitor, also substantiated Dickens' impressions. He writes: "This is particularly the case in the township of Manchester: its narrow streets, its courts and cellars have been abandoned to the poorest grade of all. There they live higher from the view of the higher ranks by piles of stores, mills, ware houses, and manufacturing establishments, less known to their wealthy neighbours who reside chiefly in the open spaces on Cheetham, Broughton, and Chorlton."

Workers had no right to form trade unions and in case of strikes, were treated with utmost brutality. In July 1844, as a result of strike, the workers of Manchester faced state wrath as described by Engeles in these words: "Strikers received notices to quit their cottages, and within a week all forty thousand of them had been put out into the street. This measure was carried out with revolting savagery. The sick, the infirm, the aged, the infants, and even pregnant women were mercilessly kicked out of their beds into street."

It is evident that beneficiary of imperialism was the aristocracy which built palatial buildings for their residence, cultivated sophisticated customs and social rituals, adopted frock-coats, and top-hats as distinguished marks of their high status. John Buchannan, a visitor to London in 1899, observed that: "Conversation was not the casual thing it has now become, but was something of an art, in which competence conferred prestige."

That was how the great imperial power of Britain treated its own people in the hey-day of its power and, in the words of Kipling, carried white man's burden to their colonies to civilize and modernize their barbarian and savage inhabitants.

Brutality is inherent in the ethos of imperialism. Once it is applied to colonizers it, consequently, dehumanizes the

perial society. As a result, it subjugates not only other nations but also humiliates and insults its own citizens. Recent events show that on the one side the American imperialists are claiming to liberate "conquered" people but on the other hand, they are violating their own constitution and suppressing democratic rights and traditions and putting their own people under surveillance. Imperialism has no human face. It is a monster that not only destroys and annihilates others but also devours its own people.

CHANGING FACE OF IMPERIALISM

The world has never remained free from imperialism. It has emerged from time to time in different forms and shapes. Sometimes, its slogan was 'mission for civilization' and sometimes its justification was to establish an enlightened rule and liberate people from tyranny and oppression.

With this moral force, it defended itself against the criticism and charges made against it. Such was the impact of the noble mission of imperialism that even up to the beginning of the 20th century, the liberals and socialists of Europe regarded it an essential tool to civilize and modernize Asian and African countries. The situation turned after the First and Second World War when, in most of the colonized countries, freedom movements began, based on indigenous nationalism. The leaders of these movements exposed the abuses of imperialism, such as political domination, robbing of natural resources, distortion of cultural values and economical and social backwardness.

The resistance put imperial powers in defence. Imperial historians and politicians came forward with the argument that in actuality, occupation and extension of territories was not the motive of their rule. On the contrary, the real mission was to improve the material condition of the colonized countries. In some cases, their argument was that the colonized countries invited them to come and liberate them either from their enemies or tyrant ruler. However, when nationalist movements became strong, the imperial intellectuals attacked them and denigrated them. Their main

target was 'Asian and African nationalism' which was used by these movements as an affective instrument to fight imperialism.

The argument was that as nationalism was the product of the progressive and advanced European society, the colonized countries, as backward and tribalized, could not produce pure and progressive nationalism. Therefore, they called it a frustrated, polluted, distorted and tribal form that had no match with European nationalism. The main purpose of this criticism was that as nationalism was a product of enlightened societies, it could not be successful in backward countries.

Frank Fueredi in his book *The New Ideology of Imperialism*: renewing the Moral Imperative traces different phases of European imperialism and that how European intellectuals ridiculed the anticolonial movements. For example, W.J. Crocker, in his book *Self-Government for the Colonie*, campares Indian nationalism with the Nazis. "In Mahatma Gandhi's Land of Ahimsa and Satyagraha, I found myself back in pre-war Nazi Germany. There were the same massed processions, the same screaming press from which objectivity and decency alike been abolished, the same murder-inciting speeches, the mobs, the flags, the quasi-military parades, the special salutes, the uniforms, the oaths and the Heils (*Jai Hind*)."

Some argued that anti-colonial sentiments were a product of their psychological condition. The conflict between modernity and traditions distorted the personality of a native and after depriving him of his spiritual values, reduced him as a 'marginal man'. This disintegration of his personality turned him anti-colonial. Through political involvement, he wanted to retrieve his lost personality. Arguing it, their main motive was to prove that anti-colonial movements were not against occupation and exploitation, but an expression of the sickness of mind.

After independence, when the Asian and African countries took advantage of the rivalry of the West and the USSR, the

old colonial masters did not like this. Harold Macmillan, the British Prime Minister, once remarked: "It puts tremendous blackmailing weapon into the hands of quite unimportant countries in the Afro-Asian camp who, if it were not the tremendous rivalry between Russia and the Free World, would not be able to sell their favours so dear."

After the fall of the USSR, the Third World countries again became vulnerable and open to Western and American intervention. To control their resources and rule over them, it is once again argued that the newly independent countries have failed to solve their problems by themselves. They are either ruled by military dictators or corrupt politicians who have no capacity to improve the conditions of the common people. Keeping in view their performance, G.R. Elton, a British historian, remarked that the dissolution of the British Empire was a colossal error. Another British historian, John Charmley, writes: "Look at Uganda under the British and look at it now."

Armed with these arguments, the new imperial powers have moral justification to reoccupy and rule over Third World countries. On the other hand, the Third World countries are defenceless as there is no rival power to support and protect them. This has made new imperialism energetic and forceful. Now, it has new slogans for its expansion, such as terrorist states, weapon states, rogue states and fundamentalists and criminals in those states which are not liked by the West. There is a moral justification for intervention, occupation and to rule over them till they are civilized and democratized. One of the columnists of the *Daily Telegraph* suggested: "An ugly, evil spirit is abroad in the Third World and it cannot be condoned; only crushed as Carthage was crushed by the Romans."

However, the role of imperialism in the past as well as in the present raises a number of questions. Are the nations of the Third World immature and need to be ruled by some western power for progress and modernization? Why have the newly independent countries failed to solve their social, political

and economic problems, and always look to the advanced and developed countries for help and assistance? If the nations of the Third World countries are not capable, isn't the solution to surrender their sovereignty and recognize patronage of Western imperialism?

These are the questions that are required to be investigated by Third-World intellectuals!

VIOLENCE IN A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

When Amrozi, the suspect in Bali bombing case, was captured, the event was welcomed throughout the world with the hope that his trial would now lead to further disclosures about the terrorist network behind the ghastly incident and that all the perpetrators of the heinous crime would ultimately be awarded the punishment that they deserved. If this is a standard method to root out terrorism, then, as a corollary, why not those terrorists who bombed civilians in Afghanistan and Iraq be pursued as well and punished likewise?

Belgium had a law in its statute book to try anybody who is involved in crimes against humanity, but, strangely enough, only recently its Prime Minister, under the pressure of Washington, announced to scrap it. So, the truth remains that those who are powerful are free to commit crimes against humanity without any fear. Not the weak ones.

Throughout history, violence has either been used as a political tool by powerful groups to crush those who were opposed to their authority or by the weaker sections of society to avenge injustice, exploitation, and to change the structure of state in their favour. A study of history of violence shows that it has passed through different stages. In the first stage, violence was used against individuals. It were the times when kings and monarchs wielded absolute power, therefore, it was believed that removal of unpopular and cruel ruler was the only alternative to get rid of him. Such incidents of violence gave a message to the new ruler: either

abandon the policy of his predecessor and reform state structure or be ready to face the same fate.

In the second category, if religious sects or social/political groups were subjected to oppression by the administration, the victimized parties reacted by attacking those individuals who were responsible for their bad fate. In Muslim history, we find that the policy of violence was effectively applied by the followers of Hassan bin Sabah, who were known as *Fidayeen*. When harassed by the rulers, state administrators and Ulema, the *Fidayeen* resorted to acts of violence to silence their opponents.

The prominent persons who were killed by them included Nazam ul Mulk Tusi (d.1092), Abbasid caliph al-Mustarshid (d.1135), his son al-Rashid (d.1135), the Saljuq Sultan Daud (d.1143), and Abul Mohsin (d.1108), the jurist of Qizvin, who preached against the Ismailis. The argument behind the killing of rulers, religious scholars and administrators was that by eliminating them the propaganda against them would cease and that it was, in a sense, the best method to avoid bloody civil wars or internal riots. In modern parlance it can be described as target killing. Generally people were not involved in the acts of violence.

The same policy was adopted in the modern times by the secret societies that were formed in Italy, Germany, Austria and Russia. They called themselves patriots and wanted to change the political system in favour of the interests of common folks. In Russia, where Czars were very powerful and refused to reform the political system, the radical groups made attempts to eliminate them in the hope that the successors might learn a lesson and change state policies.

In Iran where Muhammad Raza ruled with iron hand, revolutionary elements tried several times to assassinate him with the motive to end his dictatorial regime. It is clear that in a monarchical and dictatorial structure where there are no democratic methods to change, violence becomes the only option. It is evident from Nazi Germany where many

attempts were made on the life of Hitler, as there was no constitutional way to check his unlimited authority. One can find plenty of examples of such cases in history.

The third category of violence emerged against colonial rule and occupied powers. The colonial powers not only militarily crushed opposition but also introduced policies that were contrary to the interests of colonized people. In India, for example, the opposition groups used limited democratic methods to put forward their demands but when they failed to attract government's attention towards their problems, they resorted to violence to pressure the colonial administration.

It happened in the case of the partition of Bengal (1905) when terrorist groups assassinated British officials, disrupted railway system and made many attempts on the life of the viceroy. The terrorist activities extended beyond Bengal. In one such incident that occurred at viceregal party at Ahmadabad a boy suddenly appeared there and after throwing a bomb just disappeared. In another incident, on the wedding day of Lord Minto's daughter, a bomb was placed in a flowerpot. The viceroy and his family escaped death but there were others who died as a result of the explosion.

After the First World War, Bhagat Sindh and his friends unleashed terrorism against the colonial government. Bhagat Singh was hanged in 1931 on the charges of assassinating a police officer in Lahore. Franz Fanon, in appreciation of terrorism against colonial powers, argues that it gives courage to ordinary people to fight against the foreign rule.

In the present scenario, we see how radical and revolutionary groups whose countries are occupied by foreign powers use violence against them not only in occupied territories but also in their homelands. A prominent case is that of the Palestinians. They are fighting and resisting Israelis not only in Palestine but also in Israel. Chechnya's is also a similar case. The Chechens are commiting acts of terrorism in Russia as a response to its repressive policy.

Why these groups target civilians as well and create terror among the population? Their argument is that they are in a state of war and targeting the enemy whether they be civilians or military personnel in their struggle for freedom. When the civilians support their government's policies and do not protest against the violation of human rights, they are construed to be involved in war crimes against their people, and should be punished.

However, such an approach has its dark side too. As a result of the acts of terrorism which the rebel groups consistently carry out, they lose sympathy and goodwill which they initially enjoyed of the common people for whom they are supposed to be fighting. Instead, the occupying powers begin receiving public support for their brutal actions to crush them. This creates a situation in which violence begets violence. It is evident from cases of Palestine and Chechnya where violence on both sides continues unabated.

The worst type of violence is 'state terrorism'. It happens when the state itself confers legitimacy to its acts of violence to crush its opponents in the name of 'state interest'. It no longer remains confined within limits of the state's territory but goes beyond its borders. The CIA of the United States and Mosad, the Israeli secret service, are well known for practising state terrorism and one can cite several instances to show how they assassinated the opponents of their government's policies in other countries.

Sometimes, states also send terrorist groups to other states to destabilize them by acts of terrorism. It happened in the case of Contras who were supported by the CIA to destabilize Nicaragua's leftist government. The *Jihadi* groups of Pakistan are another example which are secretly sent to the occupied Kashmir to destabilise security conditions there.

In another category of violence, sectarian or political groups in an attempt to weaken a government, they are opposed to, commit acts of violence in public places and create a sense of insecurity among general population. In these cases, they

disturb normal life and terrorize the people in general by bombing bus stations, railways, and market places. When the government takes action against these groups, they, in a bid to take revenge, attack people to create an impression that the incumbent administration is too weak to protect its people.

By resorting to such offensive actions, it also warns the authorities against taking any punitive action against them and also that it was high time that it changed its policies. Sometimes, secret agencies of the government organize terrorist groups to use them in their own interest such as the group of Bhinderwala in East Punjab which had the support of the government. However, in most of the cases, such groups blackmail their patrons and become a liability for them.

The question is: Is violence a solution to all the problems? If not, then what policy should be adopted by the state to solve problems? In this regard, one should remember that the policy of violence, whether adopted by groups or state, is essentially an expression of weakness, not power. It creates anarchy, choas and uncertainty and fails to produce any positive results.

History tells us that only those resistance movements were able to meet victory which had strong intellectual and moral base. A case in point is African National Congress. It adopted armed struggle as a policy of resistance but simultaneously also launched an intellectual and moral movement which subsequently enabled it to gain wider international support against apartheid practised by South Africa's white racist regime. This should become a moral for resistance movements in Chechnya, Palestine, and Iraq.

DEMOLITION OF TEMPLES

It is the phenomenon of history that conquerors, after defeating their counterparts and occupying their territories, had demolished their places of worship in order to humiliate them and assert their political domination. Sometime, they converted these places to their worship centres. In the medieval Indian history, the Muslim rulers followed this policy and demolished a number of temples or converted some of them to mosques as a symbol of their power. Their deeds of desecration of temples and breaking of idols are reported in details in the Persian text with an admiration to raise their status as devoted and virtuous Muslims. Mahmud of Ghazna (989-1030) is on the top who razed a number of temples including Somanatha and earned the title of 'idol breaker' Hindusha Qasim Firishta in *Tarikh-i-Firishta* quotes a response of Mahmud which he sent to the Raja of Thanesar that: "We Muslims believe that in case of preaching Islam and destroying the worshipping places of the infidels we would be rewarded profusely in the next world." It became the tradition of the court historians to eulogize their patron and attribute to him the acts of demolition of temples in hyperbolic language.

During the colonial period, on the evidence of these Persian texts, the British historians and administrators propagated the theme of demolition of temples to create a divide between the Hindus and the Muslims. Elliot & Dowson in the *History of India* as told by its own historians selected those excerpts from the Persian texts, which show the tyranny and bigotry

of the Muslim rule.

The issue of demolition of temples by the Muslim rulers was politicized during the communal period in the 1920s. Again based on the Persian texts, the communalist Hindu historians presented exaggerated figures of the temples that were destroyed during the Muslim rule. The Muslim historians defending these acts argued that the temples were razed to the ground because of their role in political intrigues or because of moral corruption. It was also pointed out that the number was highly exaggerated and in reality only few and not so many, as mentioned by the other side, were demolished.

The issue again surfaced recently as a result of 'Hindutva' ideology when the extremist Hindus leaders accuse the Muslim rulers as foreigners who demolished the Hindu temples as a result of sheer religious fanaticism. This justified them to destroy the Babri mosque which they claimed was built on the site of Rama's *janambhomi* (birthplace).

Recently, Richard M. Eaton in his essay *Temple Desecration and Indo-Muslim States* looks at the issue of demolition of temples from a different angle. According to him, in case of Mahmud of Ghazna, the attack on the temples was just to plunder their wealth which he required for building of his Empire. However, later on the temples were demolished not for plunder but to assert political domination. As some of the temples were closely connected to the person of a ruler who was regarded sometime as incarnation of the deity and sometimes its deputy representative. In such cases the defeated and rebel ruler's temple and his diety were desecrecated as a punishment. Such as Viththala at Pandharpur in Maharashtra or Jagannath at Puri in Orissa. Eaton proves that the Muslim rulers did not demolish those temples that had no connection politically with the ruler such as Khajerao temples, which were left untouched. He quotes that from 1192 to 1729 only 8 temples were demolished.

However, it was the practice that once a territory came under their control, they not only protected temples but also repaired them. For example in 1326 Muhammad Tughluq, after the conquest of the Deccan, ordered to repair a Siva temple in his territory. Sultan Shahabuddin (1353-73) of Kashmir refused to melt the silver and golden idols. In another case, the Ulama asked Sikander Lodi (1489-1517) not to demolish temples as it was against the tenets of Islam.

In case of the Mughal rulers, they protected the temples and provided them financial assistance. The Rajput mansabdars of the Mughal court not only repaired the old temples but also constructed the new ones. However, in case of rebellions and disloyalty of the Hindu rulers, the Mughal emperors took severe action and destroyed the temples in the territory of the recalcitrant raja or ruler such as in 1613, Jahangir (1605-1627) ordered to desecrecate an idol which was in the temple belonging to an uncle of Rana Amar of Mewar who was fighting against the Mughals. Shahjahan (1628-1658) and Aurangzeb (1658-1707), thus, demolished the temples or broke the idols only in those cases when there were rebellions against them.

Eaton and Romila Thapar both give a number of instances when the practice of demolition of enemy's temples and desecrecation of images as revenge was prevalent before the arrival of the Muslim rulers in India. Romila Thapar states that the Pallavia king took away the image of Ganesh from the temple of Vatapi. There were instances when the Hindu kings violated religious sanctity of the Jain temples. Aurangzeb, who is accused of destroying temples, appears also as a patron of the Hindu houses of worship. On the basis of Eaton's argument he took action against those temples that were located in rebellions terrotries. Now, there are new evidence that he patronized Jangambari at Kashi, Someshwarnath at Allahabad, and Umnanda at Guwahati. He bestowed *jagirs* to a number of Jain temples whose *framin* are still preserved by their priests. He also allotted a piece of

land to Mahaka at Ujjain for the expenses to keep lighting throughout the year.

If we analyse the whole issue of demolition of temple with a broader perspective, we can see that it was a question of assertion of political power rather than to violate religious sensibilities of the enemy. However, when history is used for political motives, it is distorted, and misinterpreted. In case of demolition of temple both the Muslim and the Hindu historians are responsible to misrepresent the issue and use for their political ends.

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